

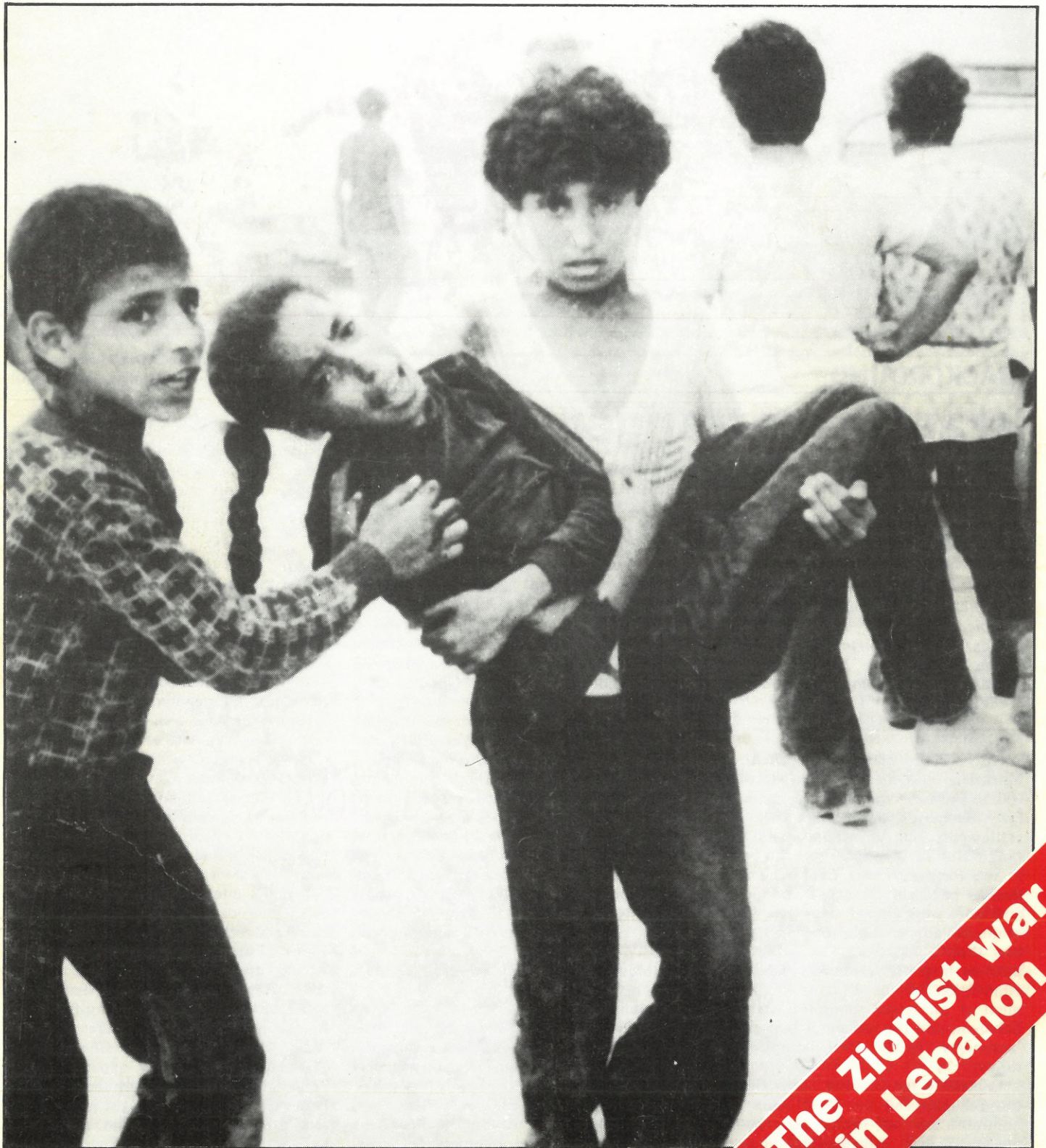
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**The Zionist war
in Lebanon**



BACKGROUND

Israel's 'rearrangement' of Lebanon is aimed at West Bank and Gaza

□ ISRAEL SAW its invasion of Lebanon as a means of tightening its grip on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. To prevent the Palestinians from re-organising in Lebanon, the Zionists are implementing a sweeping 'rearrangement' of the country.

WHEN THE Zionists launched their blitzkrieg on Lebanon, their stated aim was to push Palestinian forces back some forty kilometres, putting Israel's northern settlements out of artillery and rocket range. But the invasion forces did not stop at the forty kilometre limit, and Zionist leaders have since made clear that their ambitions have always been much grander than originally admitted. Israel wants nothing less than a complete redrawing of the political map in the region, entailing the elimination of the PLO, the establishment of an Israeli-sponsored statelet in Lebanon, and the unilateral imposition of 'autonomy' in the 1967 occupied territories.

Central to the Zionists' aims, both for the Lebanon and the West Bank is the neutralisation of Palestinian military power. Zionist protestations about the

need to 'destroy' the PLO to safeguard Israel's northern settlements cannot, however, be taken seriously. Since the ceasefire established in south Lebanon in July 1981 there were no Palestinian artillery or ground attacks across the border, despite repeated Israeli provocations.

The real significance of the invasion centres on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where Israel is trying to impose its version of the Palestinian 'autonomy' called for by Camp David. The Zionists believe that it is only 'PLO intimidation' that has prevented West Bankers from collaborating in Israel's plans. At the same time, the Zionists have deluded themselves into believing that the PLO is simply a 'gang of terrorists' that can be eliminated, paving the way for 'moderates' in the West Bank to come forward and embrace the 'autonomy' scheme.

Annihilation

As early as 6th June, the day the Zionists sent their ground forces across the border, Israeli foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir told Israeli radio that 'The annihilation of the PLO terrorists would contribute to the welfare of the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria (as Israel

Israeli shell explodes in Beirut in another wave of bombing

terms the West Bank) and the Gaza district, and the chance of incorporating them in the peace process.' By the 'peace process', Shamir meant 'autonomy'.

On 10th June the *Irish Times* quoted a 'very earnest Government press officer' as saying: 'When we have beaten or discredited them [the PLO] there is a chance of a political settlement.' He added: 'We must separate the Palestinians from the PLO.'

On 16th June Yitzhak Shamir told the *International Herald Tribune* that the invasion had opened the way for 'progress on autonomy negotiations' in the 1967 occupied territories. In the West Bank, he said, 'there are lots of Palestinians who want to co-operate with us, and now they won't be intimidated'.

The Zionists intended not only to destroy Palestinian military power in Lebanon, but also to ensure a permanent end to Palestinian influence in the country. This implied a radical restructuring of Lebanon's internal affairs, leading to the conclusion of a peace treaty between Israel and a client regime in Beirut.

For a number of years, the Zionists have co-operated closely with the extreme right wing Phalangist forces that control a swathe of territory stretching from East Beirut northwards along the Lebanese coast. Headed by Bashir Gemayel, the Phalangists are bitterly opposed to the Palestinians. In a southern border strip, Israel is allied with the right wing 'Christian' militia of Sa'ad Haddad, a cashiered Lebanese army major.

Both have key roles in Zionist plans for Lebanon. Israel is already handing over the northern parts of the area it has occupied to Gemayel's Phalangists, while Haddad is being encouraged to extend his sphere of influence in the south. The Zionists want firm right wing 'Christian' control over as much of Lebanon as possible, and the installation of a puppet regime headed by Gemayel, who has already declared himself a candidate for the Lebanese Presidency. Such a regime would sign a peace treaty and, acting on Israel's behalf, would prevent any re-grouping of Palestinian forces in southern Lebanon.

Syria, however, views with alarm the possibility of an Israeli client statelet along its exposed western flank, and the substantial peacekeeping forces Damascus maintains in Lebanon pose a threat to Israel's plans. It is for this reason that the Zionists have been so insistent about 'the removal of all foreign forces' from Lebanon.

Sovereignty

The Zionists say that they want to 'restore Lebanese sovereignty' and establish a 'strong central government'. On 16th June the *International Herald Tribune* quoted Shamir as saying that one of Israel's objectives was 'a settlement of Lebanon's festering civil war. He said that Israel, by its temporary occupation of part of the country, has reduced Syrian and Palestinian pressure on Lebanon at a moment when Lebanese factions are ready for national reconciliation.'

There is precious little to substantiate Shamir's assertion. On the contrary, there is every sign that the invasion has offered Israel's rightist Lebanese allies an opportunity to continue the civil war. There has already been fierce fighting in southern Lebanon between left wing Druze militiamen and the Phalangists whom the Israelis are encouraging to move into the region.

Nor is there any evidence that Israel's occupation will be as 'temporary' as Shamir Claims. It will take time for the drastic rearrangement of Lebanon that Israel wants to engineer. On 2nd July *The Times* commented: 'Some Israelis, who recall the immediate aftermath of the 1967 conquest of the Arab West Bank, see similarities in the way aspects of civilian life in Lebanon are coming inexorably under Israeli control.' The paper added that Beigin himself has said that Israel 'might have to stay in Lebanon for up to five years'.

Even when Israel does withdraw its forces, it is unlikely to evacuate the area south of the Litani River in the south. It has been a long standing ambition of the Zionist movement to incorporate this region into Israel. The Zionists claim it as part of 'Biblical Israel', but there is a more hard-headed economic claim. Israel suffers an acute water shortage, which the Litani's waters would do much to alleviate. Already ominous references have been made to the historical significance of southern Lebanon. On 28th June *Newsweek* said: 'In a recent speech Begin spoke of Tyre as the source of cedar for the construction of one of the Biblical temples.'

CONFLICT STUDY

Palestinian guerrillas force Israel into its longest war



□ *WHEN ISRAEL launched its invasion of Lebanon, it predicted that the fighting would last only a matter of days. But stubborn resistance by the Palestinians and their allies has transformed Menachem Beigin's blitzkrieg into Israel's longest war.*

Chairman Arafat tours the front line south of Beirut

quickly became apparent. Israel's claims that its invasion forces were advancing 'like a knife through butter' were soon exposed as hollow propaganda, serving merely to undermine the credibility of Zionist military spokesmen.

On 8th June, two days after Zionist ground forces poured into Lebanon, Israel claimed to have defeated the Palestinian defenders of the southern port town of Tyre. On 10th June the *International Herald Tribune* carried a despatch from Tel Aviv asserting that Sidon had fallen. The same day, *The Guardian's* Jerusalem correspondent, Eric Silver, announced that Damour had been taken.

Yet on 11th June Robert Fisk, reporting for *The Times* from Beirut, said: 'The PLO have fought over the past few days far harder than was originally imagined. Despite Israeli claims to have captured Tyre, it now transpires that Palestinian guerrilla fighters are still in action there.' He added: 'The Palestinians are also still fighting in Sidon and from bunkers in their township of Damour, just south of Beirut.'

On 17th June, seven days after Israel claimed to have crushed resistance in Sidon, *The Times'* Robert Fisk, describing a visit to the town, said: 'An Israeli officer refused to take us to the school because he said the area had not yet been made safe from guerrillas although it was only a short drive from the city centre.'

Legend

The battle for Khalde, a village five kilometres south of Beirut, has already become a legend. The invasion forces launched five assaults, each with heavy casualties, before dislodging the Palestinian and ▸

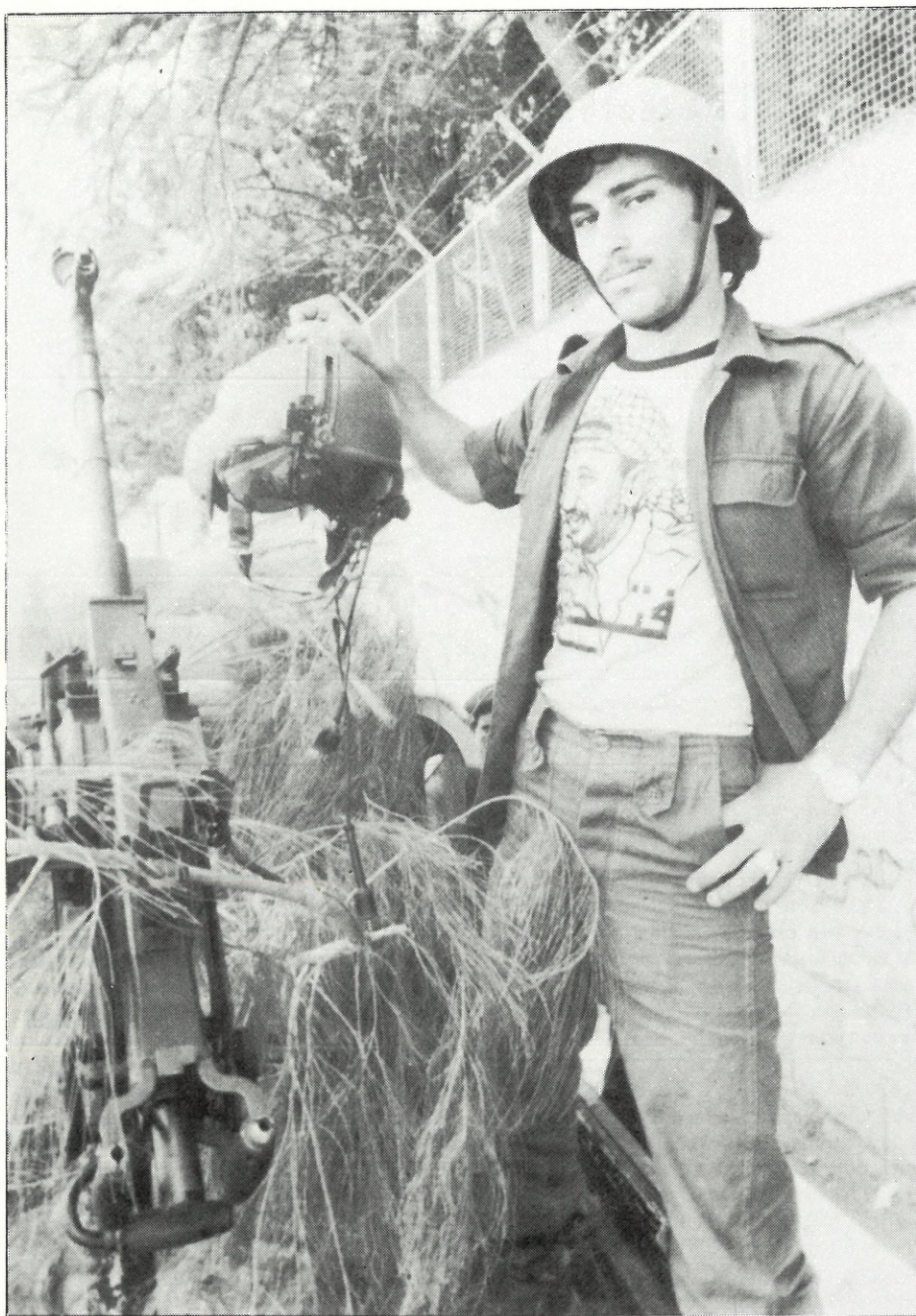
'TEN DAYS ago you said in this studio that the war had in fact finished. Yet today, almost three weeks after the beginning of the war, it is still going on with heavy casualties, and the end is not in sight.' With this accusation during a television interview on 25th June with Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon, an Israeli journalist underlined the tenacity of resistance to the invasion of Lebanon.

The guerrilla fighters dashed early Israeli hopes of a lightning victory, in the style of June 1967. The invasion of Lebanon has become Israel's longest-ever war. Parallels are already being drawn with the US experience in Vietnam. There is growing unease amongst the Israeli public at the level of Zionist casualties, and a grudging respect amongst Israeli troops themselves at the bravery of the Palestinian fighters.

The rapid advance of the Zionist tank columns came as no surprise. The Palestinian guerrillas have never deluded themselves into believing that they could halt major armoured thrusts using conventional tactics. By training and long experience, the Palestinian fighters excel in hit-and-run guerrilla warfare and street fighting.

While the Zionist armour rumbled north, the Palestinian guerrillas melted into the hilly country inland, which is ideal for classic hit-and-run attacks. Others took up positions in towns, villages and refugee camps in readiness for house-to-house battles.

Street battles figured prominently in the early fighting, and the guerrillas' tenacity



A downed Israeli pilot's helmet held by PLO fighter

▷ Lebanese defenders. On 11th June *The Guardian* described the stubborn resistance of the leftist Lebanese Amal militia at Khalde two days before: 'Using anti-armour rockets and displaying great courage, the militiamen destroyed four tanks and killed six crewmen.'

On 11th June the *Irish Times* related another of the battles for Khalde: 'The PLO has left dozens of its guerrilla fighters lying dead on the beaches around Khalde after holding off an Israeli tank attack during the afternoon with rocket propelled grenades. So fiercely did the Palestinians fight the invading army that they set two tanks on fire and captured an Israeli armoured personnel carrier intact, and drove it into Beirut.'

Ambushes

While Palestinian and leftist Lebanese guerrillas harassed Zionist troops in Lebanese streets, others launched a wave of ambushes behind Israeli front lines. In an ambush on 10th June the Zionists lost Maj Gen Yekutiel Adam, a deputy

chief of staff who had just been named as head of the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad. He was the highest ranking Zionist officer ever killed in battle.

The aftermath of another raid, on a Zionist tank and military unit, was detailed by the *Daily Telegraph's* Hugh Davies on 14th June. The spot was near the village of Enharsha, a mere 13 miles north of the Israeli border. 'The road had been mined and rocket propelled grenades used by the heavily outnumbered attackers,' said Davies.

On 16th June the *Daily Telegraph* disclosed: 'Guerrillas trapped behind Israeli lines are still staging hit-and-run attacks on troops.' On 23rd June, two weeks after the invasion, *The Guardian's* Eric Silver referred to 'hit and run ambushes' being staged by what he termed 'guerrilla stragglers still at large in the south'.

On 29th June, long after Beirut had been encircled, the *Daily Telegraph* announced that 'Israeli troops were searching last night for guerrillas who fired a rocket

propelled grenade at an army truck east of Damour, six miles south of Beirut. Three soldiers were wounded in the attack.'

The Zionists have imposed the strictest censorship on war reports, in a bid to play down both the scale of destruction wrought in Lebanon, and their failure to bring to a conclusion what they describe euphemistically as 'mopping up operations' in the south. But, belying repeated Israeli claims to have 'occupied' the whole of south Lebanon, Maj Gen Aharon Yariv, a former head of Israeli military intelligence, was quoted by *The Guardian* on 28th June as admitting that 'pockets of PLO resistance were still holding out throughout the area now under Israeli control'.

This was confirmed by *The Times* on 5th July, which said: 'Although the Israelis say they have destroyed the PLO in southern Lebanon, Israeli soldiers have privately told the United Nations that they believe up to 1,000 Palestinian guerrillas escaped their Army and are still at large in the south of the country.'

Daily funerals

By the end of June the Zionists had admitted to a total of 271 dead, 13 missing and 1,470 wounded, but the true figures were believed to be much higher. Observers found it difficult to imagine that the invaders had not suffered at least 1,000 dead after three weeks of bitter fighting. Certainly there are reports of daily funerals in Israel of soldiers killed in Lebanon.

With Palestinian guerrillas still operating widely behind Israeli lines, Zionist casualties continue to mount, and with growing domestic opposition to the war, the loss of each soldier has a political price at least as high as the human cost.

Perhaps the most eloquent tribute to the tenacity of the Palestinian fighters has come from the Israeli troops who have faced them. On 9th June the *Financial Times* told how one Israeli soldier 'became quite excited as he described how his armoured unit fought its way through one Lebanese village. Visibly reliving the moment, he described how guerrillas kept appearing everywhere with rockets and how his unit had to swivel its weapons from side to side as it tried to locate and destroy the sources of fire.'

On 14th June Hugh Davies described in the *Daily Telegraph* how Israeli troops 'have a sneaking regard for the competence and even boldness shown by their enemy'.

And on 28th June an Israeli tank commander, who identified himself only as 'Eitan', told Israel radio: 'We didn't expect the Palestinians to fight as hard as they did. We expected them to flee.' He said that Israeli armoured columns had had comparatively little difficulty moving north, but added that the street fighting had been ferocious. 'We lost many of our best men,' he disclosed.

Israel's cemetery

A key reason for the Zionists' hesitation in attacking Beirut was the very heavy casualties they knew they would sustain in fierce street battles with the seasoned

Palestinian fighters in the city. As Thomas Friedman said in the *International Herald Tribune* on 5th July: 'It takes only one trip to the Palestinians' forward position on the southern outskirts of Beirut to understand why the Israeli army is reluctant to invade the Lebanese capital.'

He described the Al Lailake area as 'a honeycomb of narrow twisting streets in which every building seems to house five or six heavily-armed Palestinian fighters. Anti-aircraft guns are hidden in alleyways and the streets are pocked with freshly drilled holes for the insertion of land mines.'

Friedman quoted a young guerrilla as saying: 'If the Israelis come in here they will not be able to use their air force. They will have to come and get us with tanks and men. They do not like street fighting, but street fighting is all we know.'

Another Palestinian defender told Friedman that West Beirut was 'full of fighters'. He added: 'Maybe the Israelis will come, and maybe they will win here, but I promise you it will be a big cemetery for them.'

MILITARY

Israel's US-supplied terror weapons

□ *HIGH CIVILIAN casualties in the Lebanon were no accident. The level of injuries was high because Israel used a refined form of cluster bomb. Children appear to have been a prime target.*

'IT'S HIDEOUS. We're getting pieces of people.' That is how Dr Amal Shammar of Beirut's Berbir Hospital described to the *International Herald Tribune* on 28th June the horrifying effect of Israel's widespread use on densely populated areas of US-supplied, anti-personnel cluster bombs (CBUs).

In a report from Beirut dated 15th June, Colin Smith of the *Observer News Service* gave a chilling description of cluster bombs: 'The basic principle behind all CBUs is that the weapon, which to look at is not much different from an ordinary high explosive bomb, is designed so that its outer casing strips off in flight and it sows 200 or so bomblets over an area as big as a football pitch. Each bomblet explodes into hundreds of pieces of tiny, deadly shrapnel.'

In the early 1970s, the United States supplied Israel with about 22,000 cluster bombs, and the Zionists used them to devastating effect during their 1978 invasion of south Lebanon. Because that invasion was launched in spring, many of the bomblets failed to explode on impact because the ground was soft. Many people were wounded well after the end of open hostilities when they un-

wittingly handled the bomblets, or tripped over them.

Yet in Israel's current invasion of Lebanon, many bomblets are again failing to explode on impact, despite the hard, sun-baked ground. As Colin Smith explained: 'The Israelis are using a refinement of the weapon that appears to be quite deliberately designed so that there is a good chance that not all the bomblets will explode on impact.'

He added: 'There are military reasons for this type of design. For instance, in an attack on an airfield a number of unexploded bomblets lying about would discourage repairs.' In southern Lebanon, however, the Zionists have not been attacking airfields. Cluster bombs have been used widely on towns, refugee camps and villages, inflicting terrible casualties on impact, and leaving behind what amount to scattered booby trap bomblets.

Colin Smith described how unexploded cluster bomblets were 'scattered about the conifered grounds and courtyards of an Armenian sanatorium, mostly for geriatrics and TB cases, in the Chuf mountain village of Aazouniye around which some of the heaviest fighting between the Israelis and Syrians took place.'

Smith described the bomblets as 'flat-sided cones, each one equipped with a pair of black metal wings, and containing in its hollow interior a black sphere slightly bigger than a golf ball and fitted with a simple pin-type detonator'. He reported Gabriel Mikalian, the sanatorium's administrator as saying that four villagers had been seriously injured when they handled the cones.

Confirming that the unexploded bomblets witnessed by *The Observer's* Colin Smith were not freaks, Zionist chief of staff Raphael Eitan, in a message to invasion forces broadcast on Israel armed forces radio on 19th June, warned soldiers not to pick up unidentified objects, and revealed that eight men had been wounded when they 'picked up pieces of cluster bombs as a memento'.



Civilian casualties are high: many are victims of cluster bombs

GENEVA CONVENTIONS

Denial of PoW status angers Red Cross

□ *PLO FIGHTERS taken prisoner, along with civilians detained, are being denied treatment according to the Geneva Conventions. This report looks at the terms of the Convention and examines why the Zionists have adopted their stand.*

TO ALLOW full rein to its pogrom against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, Israel has refused to recognise captured Palestinian guerrillas as *bona fide* prisoners of war, protected by the Geneva Conventions. The Third Geneva Convention says that prisoners of war include 'members of armed forces, militias and voluntary corps, including organised resistance movements'. Members of resistance movements are defined as being commanded by a person responsible for subordinates, having a 'fixed, distinctive sign recognisable at a distance', carrying arms openly, and conducting their operations 'in accordance with laws and customs of war'. The Convention provides for prisoners of war to be visited by Red Cross officials, forbids their interrogation or trial, and provides for their eventual repatriation.

In their desperate attempt to side-step the Geneva Conventions, the Zionists blandly assert that the Palestinian forces are merely 'terrorists' who do not observe the 'laws and customs of war'. This callous attitude contrasts sharply with the Palestinian position. Early in the conflict, after capturing an Israeli pilot, the PLO affirmed that it would treat all Israeli soldiers as prisoners of war.

Application of the Third Geneva Convention would severely hamper Israel's savage pogrom against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. But it would also pose awkward diplomatic problems for the Zionists. To grant POW status to Palestinian prisoners would imply recognition of the PLO as a legitimate resistance movement. In *The Times* on 23rd June Christopher Walker quoted a Zionist officer in Sidon as saying: 'Beigin would prefer to go to his grave than do that.'

Edward Cody pointed to another factor in *The Guardian* on 24th June: 'Giving them POW treatment would raise another difficult problem, that of repatriating them after a war. Palestinians have no country of their own, and sending them back to Lebanon would run contrary to Israeli efforts to prevent reconstitution of PLO military forces.'

Instead of according the POW status they clearly deserve, the occupation forces are holding Palestinian and other prisoners under military ordinances that have their origins in the Defence (Emer- ▶

▷ gency) Regulations promulgated by the British in 1945 in a bid to counter Zionist terrorism in Palestine. The ordinances enable prisoners to be detained without trial for successive three-month periods.

'Shocking'

Israel's efforts to twist the terms of the Geneva Conventions to suit its own ends have received no support from independent authorities. In a letter to *The Times* on 29th June, Ian Brownlie, Professor of International Law at All Souls College, Oxford, and Reginald Austin, Senior Lecturer in Law at University College, London, rejected Israel's assertions out of hand, referring to the Zionists' treatment of prisoners as 'shocking'. The

prisoners' status, they said, had 'clearly not been determined' as required by Article Five of the Third Geneva Convention. This grants such persons 'the protection of the Convention until such time as their status has been determined by a competent tribunal'.

The international lawyers' interpretation of the Geneva Conventions has been endorsed by the International Red Cross. On 29th June the *Daily Telegraph* said: 'At the International Red Cross in Geneva yesterday, Mr Nicholas Sommer, Custodian of the Geneva Convention, confirmed that Israel was a signatory and that the Red Cross considered all those taken prisoner during the campaign to be prisoners of war.'

INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

Israel blocks food and medical aid

□ *DESPITE THE scale of injuries and destruction in South Lebanon, Israel has barred international relief agencies from operating in the area. Western journalists who managed to reach the region provide a shocking picture.*

AN ESTIMATED 14,000 people have been killed and 20,000 wounded in Israel's blitzkrieg in Lebanon. The indiscriminate bombing and shelling of towns, refugee camps and villages has left up to 500,000 homeless, and destroyed basic utilities such as water and electricity supplies. Yet the Zionists have responded by deliberately hindering the major international relief operation that is so urgently needed.

Israel is acutely embarrassed at the scale of the devastation in southern Lebanon. Fearful of the political repercussions of reports by independent observers, the Zionists have severely restricted the activities of both relief workers and journalists. At the same time, Israel has launched a major misinformation campaign aimed at minimising the scale of the destruction and portraying itself as generous aid donors.

On 12th June the *International Herald Tribune* commented: 'The army has clamped unparalleled secrecy on the entire operation, partly for security reasons and partly out of embarrassment at the immense suffering that appears to have been inflicted.' The motives for Israel's obstructionism were confirmed by a 'high UN official', who was quoted by the *Guardian* on 21st June as saying: 'The Israelis are afraid that if we give the Palestinians food and medical supplies it will encourage them to hold out. Besides that, Israel doesn't want a lot of outsiders going into Lebanon and seeing all the death and destruction.'

Israel's interference with relief supplies started early in the invasion, when the Zionists stopped UN peace-keeping forces in the south from distributing emergency aid to homeless civilians. Zionist ground forces swept north on 6th June. For four days Israel prevented UN relief convoys from crossing the border into Lebanon. At length, two convoys of food, water and medical supplies were allowed through to the residents of the port city of Tyre, but the Zionists then ordered all UN personnel to leave. What irked Israel were the UN men's reports of widespread suffering. 'UN observers provided detailed accounts of civilians, including small babies, stranded without



Above: refugees collect water at construction site where they have taken shelter [UPI]. Left: the despair of an old woman.

food and water,' said the *International Herald Tribune* on 12th June. The paper added that the Zionists were insisting that 'all humanitarian questions would be handled by Israel'.

Wider pattern

It soon became clear that the interference with the UN relief efforts was part of a deliberate policy. On 17th June *The Times* said: 'The Israeli Government appears to be blocking some international relief aid for the victims of the conflict in Lebanon.' It added that supplies of medicines, tents, blankets and other emergency equipment were being held up in Damascus, Jerusalem, Gaza and Cyprus, and quoted UN officials in Geneva as saying: 'The aid has failed to reach Lebanon for political, rather than practical, reasons.'

On 20th June *The Observer* revealed that Israel had rejected appeals from the International Red Cross to open an emergency supply line to Beirut from Damascus, where 150 international volunteers, mainly doctors, were being held up, along with ambulances and a ten-truck convoy of medical supplies. The paper quoted Dr Ebba Werbelane, a volunteer from Oslo, as saying: 'Closing the road to Beirut means a price in human lives. Every hour we stay here people are dying.'

On 21st June it was disclosed that Israel had refused to allow a Red Cross ship with 500 tons of aid to land at the port of Sidon, on the pretext that the harbour was mined. The town's residents rejected the Israeli explanation, pointing to the major amphibious landing at Sidon by Zionist invasion troops.

Another, and equally flimsy, pretext the Israelis are using to justify their refusal to allow relief ships to unload at ports in southern Lebanon was spelled out by Israel's economics minister in *The Daily Telegraph* on 19th June: 'Mr Meridor said that Israel was firmly against ports being used in case arms were smuggled in.'

Israel is also hampering the flow of

relief supplies to south Lebanon by insisting that all relief is distributed by the Israeli army. The Zionists know that independent humanitarian organisations refuse to place themselves in a position where they can be identified with any of the parties to a conflict. It is this Zionist ruling that has hindered the efforts of the British charity Oxfam. One of their top officials spent more than one week in Jerusalem vainly seeking permission to distribute relief supplies independently of the Zionist army.

Israel is also obstructing relief efforts by its refusal to recognise the Palestinian Red Crescent Society as a *bona fide* humanitarian organisation. This has posed particularly severe problems in Palestinian refugee camps, which were wholly served by PRCS facilities. The PRCS is a part of the PLO, and although it performs the same functions as any national Red Cross Society, the Zionists have labelled it as being part of a 'terrorist' organisation. They have banned its operations in southern Lebanon, and arrested many of the PRCS doctors and nurses as 'suspects'.

Misinformation

While on the one hand obstructing international relief efforts, Israel has also staged a carefully orchestrated and profoundly cynical misinformation campaign aimed at portraying itself as a generous purveyor of relief. Having killed and maimed thousands in its indiscriminate attacks on densely populated towns and refugee camps, the Zionists ensured that the international media was on hand to record the departure for the war zone of Israeli relief convoys. But Israel's supplies largely comprised items such as sweets and clothing, that were of little relevance to a war-torn population in dire need of basic medical supplies such as plasma and antibiotics.

Speaking in London on 24th June, Chris Dammers, Oxfam's Middle East Field Director, who had just returned from

a fact-finding trip to southern Lebanon, said that local residents saw the Israeli relief supplies as amounting to 'extremely little, accompanied by a very great deal of publicity'.

Associated with the Zionist public relations campaign is a concerted effort to play down the scale of the devastation in Lebanon, in a bid to imply that there is no urgent need for international aid. Careful control of the movements of reporters and film crews in southern Lebanon has played a key role. In the first days of the invasion, the entire region was declared off-limits to 'all civilians, and especially journalists'. It was only on 11th June that journalists were allowed entry, but even then the Zionists chose the reporters carefully, and they were allowed to travel only under close military escort. No pressmen have been permitted to visit the most devastated areas.

Reporting from Sidon in the *Daily Express* on 18th June, Philip Jacobson revealed: 'The Israelis would not allow me to go into the [Ain al Hilweh Palestinian refugee] camp. But people I had talked to who had been in Ein Hilweh during the seven days when Israeli artillery was hammering it unceasingly claim that several thousand civilians were killed or wounded.'

Similar restrictions are applied even to relief agency representatives on damage assessment tours. Oxfam's Chris Dammers disclosed that Israeli army guards had prevented him from inspecting the Rashidiyeh refugee camp near Tyre, on the grounds that there were numerous 'unexploded bombs' present.

In its hampering of relief efforts, as in so much else, Israel is in clear violation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions for the Protection of Civilians in Time of War. Article Three of the Fourth Convention expressly states that 'Persons taking no active part in hostilities shall in all circumstances be treated humanely.'

Refugees in Sidon: their home demolished by an Israeli attack (UPI)





HUMAN RIGHTS

Mass arrests and interrogation in Lebanon

□ *SOUTH LEBANON was quickly sealed off by Israeli forces and press and aid organisations barred from the region. Some journalists, however, managed to penetrate the Israeli lines to report on the Zionists' regime of terror.*

IN FLAGRANT violation of the Geneva Conventions, Zionist invasion forces are engaged in a programme of mass arrests in southern Lebanon, embracing all males, irrespective of whether they are Palestinians or Lebanese, combatants or civilians. At least 6,000 Arabs are being held for interrogation in barbed-wire compounds, and there is clear and horrifying evidence of gross maltreatment of prisoners. Some have been beaten to death.

Confirmation that Israel is not confining its detention programme to combatants came in a report from Sidon by Edward Cody in *The Guardian* on 24th June. The wife of a detainee told him that her husband 'was arrested after an Israeli lorry drove down his street in Sidon and ordered all men to surrender a week after the last fighting here'. Cody also confirmed that Lebanese civilians are being caught in the Zionist dragnet. 'Lebanese residents of Sidon said many of their relatives have also been arrested and have not been heard from,' he said.

After being rounded-up, the detainees are paraded before hooded informers, who indicate whether they should be held for interrogation. On 19th June a *Reuter* correspondent described the scene at Sidon. 'Three hooded men sat in Israeli jeeps as thousands of young men filed past for vetting by the Israeli invasion forces. The hooded men — whether willing informers or hostages an Israeli officer refused to say — decided the fate

of each captive with either a nod or a shake of the head. The prisoners who had failed the test sat cross-legged in the sun under armed guard until Israeli buses took them off for interrogation at an unknown destination. The lucky ones were set free, their identity papers stamped with the star of David to show they had passed the Israeli ordeal.' In a later despatch, on 30th June, *Reuter* added that those set free, but without identity papers, had a star of David stamped on their wrists.

In *The Times* on 23rd June Christopher Walker described the fate of captives being held at a local warehouse used as a makeshift prison camp. 'After being brought to the heavily-guarded warehouse, some of the prisoners are taken by bus the 25 miles south to Israel proper for interrogation by intelligence experts, skilled after 15 years' weeding out suspected PLO members in the occupied West Bank.' He added: 'The eventual Israeli intention is to transfer all those who will be subject to indefinite detention to a large prison camp now under construction at an undisclosed location in occupied southern Lebanon.'

Blindfolds

All the Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners are kept bound and blindfolded, herded together in barbed-wire compounds open to the blazing sun and deprived of food and water. On 23rd June Christopher Walker disclosed in *The Times*: 'The blindfolds were originally described as being necessary for "security reasons". But now the Israeli soldiers thronging the invasion route north make little secret of the fact that they are part of the disorientation process being used prior to interrogation.'

He added: 'Occasionally, the blind-

Israeli occupying forces contravene Geneva Conventions by blindfolding captured Palestinians

folded columns are spotted stumbling from one location to another attached by ropes or clutching at each other's clothing.'

The most detailed account of the maltreatment of detainees has come from two Norwegian doctors who had themselves been taken prisoner while working at hospitals in the southern port town of Tyre. Dr Oevind Moeller and Dr Steiner Berger, accused the Israelis of beating prisoners to death, and allowing them to die by negligence. The *Irish Times* said on 24th June: 'Dr Moeller said he was held by Israeli soldiers in a school for 36 hours along with 500-600 prisoners, including Palestinian combatants and civilians. "During the time in the school we witnessed the death of ten people left in stifling heat without food or drink," he said. "They were also repeatedly molested, as were most of the prisoners, who sat on the ground with their wrists bound, often blindfolded."'

Dr Moeller also described the death of one 60-year old man who had been denied water by the Zionist guards. 'Six soldiers immediately beat and kicked the man, leaving his lifeless body on the ground.'

The scale of the Zionist detention programme was revealed by Edward Cody in *The Guardian* on 24th June: 'Man-hunts and interrogations are continuing throughout occupied southern Lebanon, and the number of prisoners in the makeshift camps are likely to rise in the weeks ahead.'

Christopher Walker in *The Times* on 23rd June also referred to the rising number of prisoners, and stressed the anxiety the Zionist operation was causing detainees' relatives. 'As the number of Arabs detained goes on rising with the continuation of the Army's euphemistically described "mopping up" operation, anxiety is growing among the thousands of Palestinian women and children who have little idea whether their menfolk are in captivity or dead.'

INTERNATIONAL

America: Supporting Israel with open eyes

□ *SINCE THE start of the invasion of Lebanon, the White House has supported Israel with increasing candour, and there is clear evidence of US collusion in Israel's aggression.*

'WHERE IS America? America is a big country. Why does she close her eyes?' asked a Palestinian woman on 8th July, standing in the rubble of her home in besieged Beirut. The answer was all too clear: America had not closed her eyes; it was standing squarely behind the Zionist invasion forces that had destroyed her home — along with thousands of others in Lebanon. As the Israeli invasion has progressed, clear evidence has accumulated not only of US support for Israel's war aims, but also of prior knowledge by Washington of the attack.

In public, the US at first feigned a degree of surprise at the invasion, in a bid to appease its friends in the Arab world by creating an impression of even-handedness. On 5th and 6th June Washington voted in favour of UN Security Council Resolutions 508 and 509, which demanded an immediate and unconditional Israel withdrawal. But, even at that early stage, there were clear signs of US support for the aggression. On 6th June, when Israel launched its ground forces across the border, Reagan and Haig were attending the Versailles summit meeting of the seven major western industrial nations. Other participants wanted a strongly worded condemnation of the invasion, but the US prevented any unified western stance. On 7th July *The Guardian* said: 'Although repeatedly pressed about the US attitude to the invasion, Mr Haig consistently refused to be drawn into anything resembling a formal condemnation.'

As the Zionist invasion gathered momentum, even Washington's formal UN position changed, and the White House began vetoing Security Council resolutions that criticised Israel even indirectly. By the middle of June, the US was giving notice that, far from wishing to dissociate itself from Israel, it shared the Zionists' objectives. On 16th June the *Financial Times* announced: 'The US no longer favours Israel's immediate withdrawal from Lebanon, State Department officials said in Washington yesterday, indicating the US Government's growing support for Israeli objectives.'

The paper said that Washington considered the UN calls for an Israeli ceasefire and withdrawal to have been 'overtaken by events'. Alexander Haig was quoted as saying that the UN resolutions



'no longer provide a realistic basis for settling the crisis'.

Strange assertion

The *Financial Times* continued: 'The State Department now wants "to take advantage" of Israel's military successes to re-establish a strong and stable Lebanon.' It quoted White House spokesman Larry Speakes as saying that after Palestinian forces had been disarmed, 'The US could then put maximum pressure on the Israeli Government for a rapid move towards autonomy for the Palestinians on the demilitarised West Bank and Gaza Strip', in accordance with the Camp David agreements. It was a strange assertion, because Israel is already pushing ahead fast with the unilateral imposition of its version of Palestinian 'autonomy', and there is no sign of any need for US pressure (see Page 10).

If the Palestinians refused to acquiesce in Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Mr Speakes concluded, 'room would have to be found for them in other parts of the Arab world'.

In its belief that 'autonomy' provides an acceptable solution to the Palestine question, Washington suffers the same delusion as the Zionists. The Palestinian people have decisively rejected Camp David as failing disastrously to meet their internationally endorsed right to self

determination in a state of their own in Palestine. They see it as nothing but a veil for continued Israeli colonisation, leading to ultimate annexation of the 1967 occupied territories.

Mr Speakes' reference to a resumption of progress on 'autonomy' after the neutralisation of Palestinian forces in Lebanon reveals that Washington also shares the Zionists' fantasy that it is only 'PLO intimidation' that has stopped the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza from embracing Camp David. Israel likes to portray the PLO as nothing more than a 'gang of terrorists', who do not command wide support amongst Palestinians. 'Destroying the PLO', they claim, will end 'intimidation' and open the way for 'autonomy'. That the US shares the view that there is no meaningful difference between the PLO and the Palestinian people as a whole was underlined by President Reagan on 1st July. Reaffirming continued US support for Camp David, he said: 'One has to differentiate between the PLO and the Palestinians.'

Fundamental principles

US support for Israel's objectives became even more explicit during Menachem Beigin's visit to Washington in June. On 22nd June, after a lengthy meeting with the Zionist leader, Haig set out three fundamental principles which he said ▷

▷ should govern the resolution of the conflict. They were the removal of 'all foreign forces' from Lebanon, the establishment of a strong central government in Beirut, and the creation of conditions so that 'Israel will never again be threatened by armed attacks from southern Lebanon'.

Haig added that the Israeli invasion had created a new opportunity for the US to take the lead in pressing ahead on the 'autonomy' talks, saying that 'easing of tensions' in Lebanon would 'enhance the prospects of the autonomy talks'.

In other words, US and Israeli policies were now explicitly identical. Mr Beigin underlined his satisfaction by describing Reagan as 'a great friend of Israel' and Haig as 'a sincere, devoted friend of Israel'.

On 26th June *The Economist* said: 'Israel's prime minister returned home confident of top-ranking American support . . . With Mr Reagan mumbling his half-blessings, Mr Begin apparently feels that he has nothing to fear from his American patrons.'

A few days after Beigin's departure from Washington, the State Department confirmed that the US shared Zionist aims even on the question of West Beirut. On 29th June *The Scotsman* announced: 'The United States yesterday publicly acknowledged that American and Israeli objectives in resolving the crisis in West Beirut were "approximately the same".' The paper quoted a State Department spokesman as outlining a four-point peace plan, comprising the deployment of the Lebanese army in and around Beirut; an end to any armed Palestinian presence in and around the city; a withdrawal of Israeli forces from the area around the capital, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from around the city. *The Scotsman* noted: 'On Sunday, the Israeli Cabinet approved a broadly similar plan.'

Exact timing

Uncritical US support for Israel has come as no surprise, for there is clear evidence that the White House not only gave the go-ahead in principle for the invasion, but also knew the date it was to be launched. On 11th June *The Economist* disclosed: 'Israel's campaign in Lebanon has been in

the works ever since last July's ceasefire [in south Lebanon]. During these months the Israelis have been attempting to persuade President Reagan's administration that there could be no real sequel to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty unless the Palestinians' base in Lebanon was eliminated. They further argued that this was not feasible by non-military means.'

The journal added: 'According to Israeli sources, the American administration eventually declared itself convinced.' The discussions, said *The Economist*, 'were held discreetly at the highest level of government'.

Strong supportive evidence came in *The Times* on 16th June, which quoted a

spokesman for the Conference of Presidents of American Jewish Organisations as saying: 'We had been well prepared for the invasion by General Sharon, who briefed the organisation a little time ago.'

US naval movements pointed to American foreknowledge of the detailed timing of the Zionist onslaught. Israel launched its ground assault on 6th June, and at about the same time the *USS Kennedy* was stationed off the Lebanese coast and the *USS Eisenhower* off Crete, to monitor Soviet military movements. In July, the monthly *Middle East* magazine disclosed: 'Both ships had left their previous stations [in the Indian Ocean and Naples respectively] on 1st June to be there in time.'

ALLIANCE

Israel's economic lifeline to Washington

□ *THE INVASION of Lebanon was possible only because of massive military and economic support from the United States. Israel's belligerence is encouraged by Washington's refusal to use this aid as a lever for restraint.*

ISRAEL'S CAPACITY to launch aggressions against neighbouring states is maintained only by massive flows of weapons and cash from the United States. This makes the US the only power that can restrain the Zionists, but there is no sign in Washington of any desire to modify Israel's intransigence. The Zionist onslaught on Lebanon has prompted the White House to 'delay' the sale of 75 F-16 fighter planes, and to institute a 'study' of Israel's illegal use of American-supplied cluster bombs, given to Israel on the strict understanding that they were for defensive purposes only.

America's encouragement of Israel's aggression is in tune with Washington's past performance. Only days after last December's annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, for example, it was disclosed that the Pentagon was planning

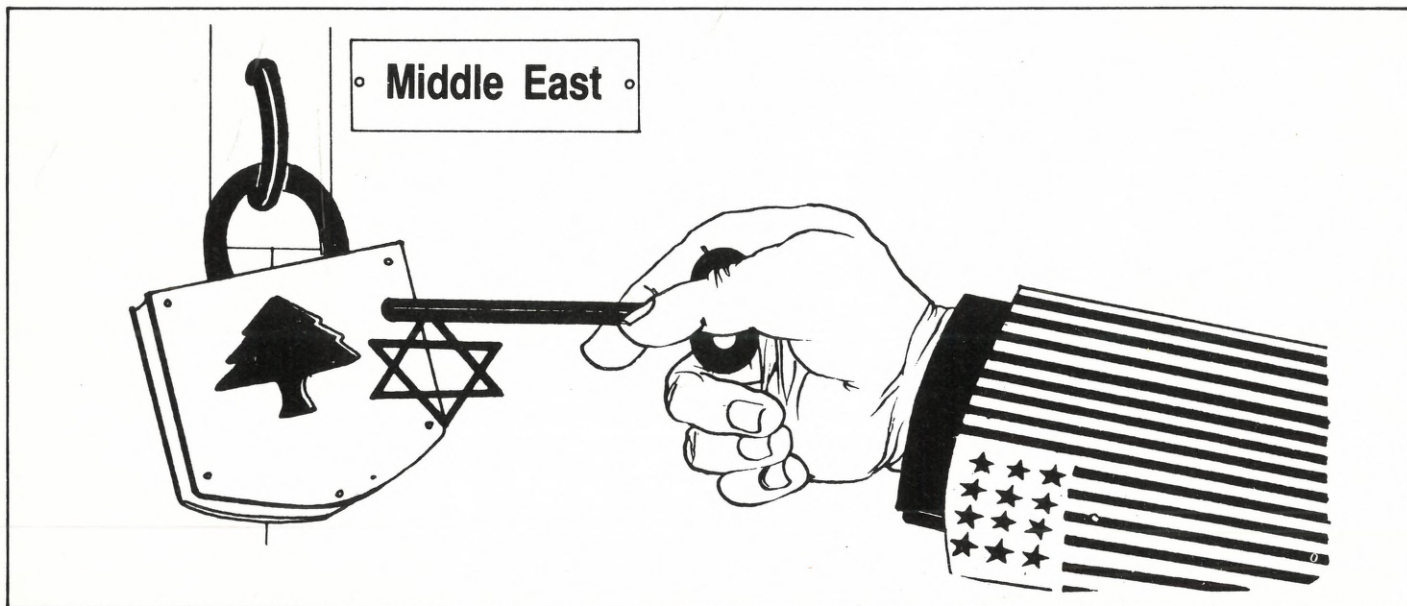
to increase arms credits to Israel in the 1983 fiscal year to \$1.7 billion — a \$300 million increase over the previous two years.

There is every sign that Washington was fully informed of Israel's intention of invading Lebanon. Yet on 27th May, less than two weeks before the start of the onslaught, the *International Herald Tribune* disclosed: 'The Reagan administration has decided to sell to Israel 75 advanced F-16 jet fighters worth about \$2.5 billion, in the largest arms sale to that country in four years.' The paper noted that delivery had just been completed of another 75 F-16s, supplied under a 1978 agreement.

The report added: 'In the last 10 years the United States has sold Israel \$8.3 billion worth of arms, and President Reagan has proposed sales totalling \$1.4 billion this year and \$1.7 billion next year.'

Economic lifeline

The full extent of US economic and military support for Israel was highlighted by Dr Thomas Stauffer in an article in the *Christian Science Monitor* on 29th December last. Dr Stauffer, a research associate



at Harvard University's Centre for Middle East Studies, declared: 'Israel is indeed, all but totally dependent on US economic support, both overt and indirect.'

He added: 'A fragile and quite indispensable economic lifeline connects Tel Aviv and Washington, providing at no cash cost the weapons Israel could not buy elsewhere in the world even if it were able to pay. It all adds up to an economic package exceeding \$3 billion per year.'

Aid from the United States, said Dr Stauffer, 'approximates almost one half of Israel's national income'. He further noted: 'US public aid over the last three years averaged \$3 billion annually, and the 1982 expenditure may again rise — a rare counter example to the slashed budgets of the administration's domestic programme.'

Dr Stauffer pointed out, moreover, that 'Almost half of US official aid consists of grants or instantaneously forgiven loans.'

Military sales account for two-thirds of official US aid, and Dr Stauffer noted that in the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, Congress created 'a special financial device in order to reduce the visibility of this aid and forestall possible public criticism'. He explained: 'Thus, for example, in fiscal 1980 \$1 billion worth of foreign military sales were authorised for Israel's account. Immediately following the "sale", however, \$500 million of the loan was cancelled and the residual \$500 million was added to the \$7-plus billion the State Department estimates that Israel now owes the US Government.'

This enormous 'debt' poses no problem for Israel, said Dr Stauffer, since the Zionist state can service it 'only in the formal sense that installments are paid when due but are in fact funded through new US aid each year'.

Private aid

Apart from official US Government aid, Israel receives enormous flows of cash from the country-wide network of American Zionist fund-raising organisations. The IMF has estimated such private aid flows at almost \$1 billion per annum. Except for Israel Development Bonds, these funds are fully tax deductible. Dr Stauffer noted that United Jewish Appeal or Hadassah contributions 'have funded access roads in the Golan Heights or settlements in the occupied territories on the West Bank'.

On 22nd January the *Jewish Chronicle* announced that more than \$227.5 million worth of Israel Development Bonds were raised in 1981, making it a record year, except for 1973, when the October Middle East war boosted sales.

The US also aids Israel by discounting military sales. Describing this practice as 'a third and murkier tier' of economic assistance, Dr Stauffer said: 'military sources indicate that some of the weapons transferred to Israel were under-invoiced at special discount prices'.

Implicit aid

'Another form of implicit aid is a net of specially drafted contracts between the



Beigin and Reagan in Washington: US aid made possible the invasion of Lebanon

US Department of Defense, or defence suppliers within the US, to support Israeli arms industries,' said Dr Stauffer, adding that these provide 'critically needed cash infusions for those firms'. He cited Israel Aircraft Industries as being 'particularly insistent on such support'. The firm, he said, has received subcontracts for manufacturing components for F-14 and F-15 fighters.

In addition, said Dr Stauffer, there is 'extensive and sustained support for Israeli universities and research institutions funded by the Department of Edu-

cation, National Institute of Health and other US agencies, which reportedly total almost \$100 million per year'.

He concluded by pointing to a particularly dishonest tactic by which Washington boosts its aid to Israel still further. Despite the Zionist state's high per capita income of over \$3,500 per annum, the US classifies Israel as a 'developing country', which entitles it to reduced or zero tariffs on exports to America. Dr Stauffer revealed that 96 per cent of Israel's annual \$1 billion exports to the US enter the country free of any tariffs.

UNITED NATIONS

World condemnation of Israel

□ *AT THE United Nations, the world community has made clear its repugnance at the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, but the United States has merely underlined its support for the Zionists' war.*

IN A remarkable series of resolutions, the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly have condemned Israel's invasion of Lebanon, and demanded an immediate withdrawal of Zionist forces. The UN has also demanded an end to Israel's obstruction of relief supplies to the stricken population of Lebanon, and called on the Zionists to halt their maltreatment of Palestinian and Lebanese residents. A key aspect of the UN's deliberations has been the US voting record, which has revealed Washington's close identification with Israel's war aims.

On 5th June, the second of two days of heavy Israeli air raids on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 508, calling on 'all parties to the conflict

to cease immediately and simultaneously all military activities within Lebanon and across the Lebanese-Israeli border'. It also expressed the Security Council's 'grave concern' at 'the violation of the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Lebanon'.

Ignoring Resolution 508, Israel the following day launched its ground forces into Lebanon. The Security Council met again, and unanimously approved Resolution 509, demanding 'that Israel withdraw all its military forces forthwith and unconditionally to the internationally recognised boundaries of Lebanon'. The Security Council also demanded that 'all parties' abide by the previous day's Resolution 508.

Contempt

Israel, however, maintained its habitual contempt for the UN, which had been so manifest in its complete disregard of the world body's peacekeeping forces in south Lebanon, and poured even more troops and armour across the border. If the ▶

▷ United States at first attempted to conceal its collusion in the invasion by voting in favour of Resolutions 508 and 509, it soon abandoned any pretence at impartiality. On 9th June Washington vetoed a Security Council Resolution which would have condemned Israel for refusing to withdraw its forces, and threatened sanctions in the event of non-compliance. All fourteen other Security Council members voted in favour.

The draft resolution, introduced by Spain, condemned 'the non-compliance with Resolutions 508 and 509' and, in the first sign of UN concern at Israel's maltreatment of civilians, urged 'the parties to comply strictly with the regulations attached to the Hague Convention of 1907'. The draft reiterated the ceasefire demand in Resolutions 508 and 509 and, in a clear reference to possible sanctions against Israel, concluded by saying that 'in the event of non-compliance' the Security Council would 'meet again to consider practical ways and means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations'.

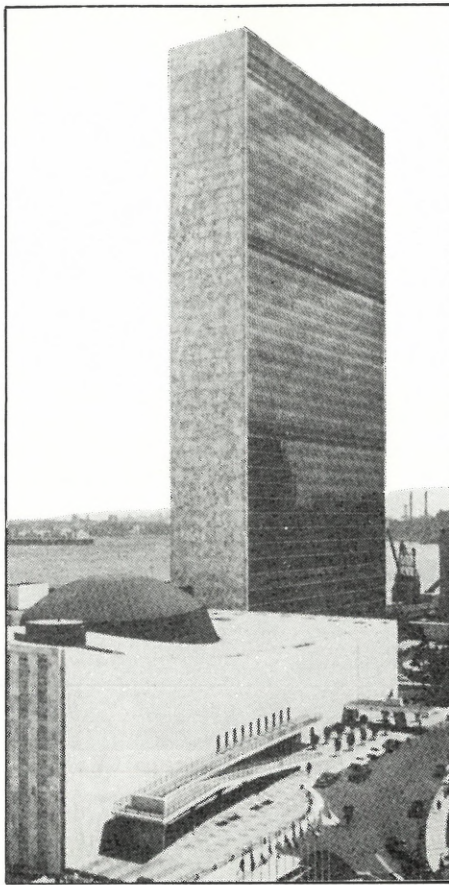
Shortly after vetoing the Spanish-sponsored Security Council Resolution, Washington moved even further towards open support for the Zionists. On 16th June the *International Herald Tribune* disclosed that two days earlier, the US had 'informally told members of the United Nations' that an Israeli withdrawal was no longer 'a realistic avenue for resolving the crisis'. The paper cited a 'senior US official at the UN' as having told Security Council members that 'the situation has moved beyond Resolution 509'.

Meanwhile, on 18th June the Security Council approved Resolution 511, renewing the mandate of UN peacekeeping forces in south Lebanon, and on 19th June unanimously passed Resolution 512, which condemned Israel for its savage treatment of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians and its obstruction of relief supplies. Referring to 'the humanitarian principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1949' and to 'the obligations arising from the regulations attached to the conflict to respect the rights of the civilian population, to refrain from all acts of violence against these populations and to take all appropriate measures to alleviate the suffering caused by the conflict, in particular by facilitating the dispatch and distribution of aid provided by UN agencies and by non-governmental organisations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross'.

It went on to appeal 'to all member states to continue to provide the most extensive humanitarian aid possible', and concluded by stressing 'the particular humanitarian responsibilities of the UN and its Agencies, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), towards civilian populations and calls upon all parties to the conflict not to hamper the exercise of those responsibilities and to assist in humanitarian efforts'.

Open support

On 26th June Washington confirmed its open support for Israel by vetoing a second Security Council resolution, calling for a



UN headquarters in New York

disengagement of forces in Beirut, and the interposition of the Lebanese Army. Introduced by France, the resolution was approved by all members except the US.

The US veto prompted an angry response even from Arab governments friendly with Washington. Egypt's President Mubarak declared himself 'greatly disappointed' and predicted that US relations with Arab governments would suffer. In an official statement on Riyadh radio, Saudi Arabia said that it 'deeply regrets the rejection of the French resolution, which could have led to positive and effective results'.

On the same day, Israel and the United States' isolation in the international community was dramatically underlined when they became the only countries to oppose a General Assembly Resolution demanding an immediate Israeli withdrawal and calling for consideration of sanctions if Israel did not comply. The Resolution, approved by 142 votes to two, with no abstentions, came at the end of a two-day emergency special session of the General Assembly requested by Cuba on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement.

Reaffirming the 'fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force', the General Assembly demanded 'strict respect for Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence within its internationally recognised frontiers'. The Resolution condemned Israel for 'its non-compliance with Resolutions 508 and 509' and urged the Security Council 'in the event of continued failure by Israel to comply' with the two resolutions, 'to meet in order to consider practical ways and means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations'.

INTERNATIONAL

Europe unites behind Palestinians

□ ISRAEL'S SAVAGE invasion of Lebanon has prompted firm condemnation from European states, who have taken the unprecedented step of cancelling a £28 million financial co-operation agreement with Tel Aviv. Britain has declared a formal arms embargo against Israel, and other EEC members are following suit.

AT A series of three top level meetings since the start of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the ten member states of the European Economic Community sharply condemned the Zionist onslaught, demanded a prompt withdrawal of Israeli forces, and reaffirmed their support for the PLO and Palestinian self-determination in a state of their own. The strength of feeling against the invasion was underlined by the cancellation of a major financial agreement with Israel.

Meeting in Bonn on 9th June, three days after Zionist ground forces poured into Lebanon, EEC Foreign Ministers roundly condemned the invasion as a 'flagrant violation of international law' and a threat to future efforts aimed at securing a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict. Opening the door to economic sanctions against Israel, the Ten insisted that if the Zionists continued to ignore UN calls for a prompt withdrawal of forces, 'the Ten will examine the possibilities for future action'.

There was a marked hardening of the EEC stance at a Foreign Ministers' meeting in Luxembourg on 21st June, following Israel's failure to provide adequate assurances about its intentions in Lebanon. Prior to the meeting, the EEC had invited Israel to assure the Ten that it recognised Lebanese sovereignty and the frontier between Lebanon and Israel, that it had no desire to annex or occupy any part of Lebanon, that it would not interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs, that it had no hostile intentions towards the Palestinian people, and that it harboured no offensive intentions against neighbouring countries, including Syria.

In a statement issued on behalf of the Ten, Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans, current Chairman of the European Council of Ministers, said that Israel 'has not given a satisfactory answer' to the EEC queries, and added that Europe continued 'to follow with anxiety the situation in Lebanon, which has gravely deteriorated since their statement in Bonn'. In an unprecedented move, the EEC formally froze cheap loans to Israel worth £28 million, and left open the possibility of imposing an arms embargo against the Zionist state.



Sanctions

EEC countries are nevertheless divided in their readiness to impose sanctions against Israel. Britain, France and Greece are reportedly at the forefront of those favouring such a move. West Germany, Denmark and Holland are apparently the most reluctant. There are also differences over the status that Europe should accord the PLO. The most enlightened stance comes from France and Greece, which argue that the EEC should jointly and formally recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

These divisions underlay a weakly-worded compromise statement issued on 29th June at the end of a Brussels meeting of EEC Government leaders. In substance, it went no further than the EEC's 1980 Venice Declaration. The Ten reaffirmed their 'vigorous condemnation of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon', and called for a disengagement of forces around Beirut. They affirmed that a final peace in Lebanon required 'the complete and prompt withdrawal of Israel forces from that country'. In a clear reference to the Zionists' obstruction of relief supplies, the Ten called on 'all parties to co-operate with the responsible international relief agencies as well as with UNIFIL'.

The EEC stressed that 'Israel will not obtain the security to which it has a right by using force and creating "faits accomplis", but it can find this security by satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, who should have the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination, with all that this implies'.

The Ten concluded by reaffirming that the 'Palestine Liberation Organisation should be associated with 'negotiations leading to an overall Middle East peace settlement'.

Arms embargo

Individual European governments, however, have gone much further than the joint EEC position. On 23rd June Britain with-



Above: Chancellor Kreisky, President Mitterand and Pope John Paul II are among European leaders who have condemned Israel's savage invasion

drew an invitation to Israel to attend the annual British arms equipment exhibition at Aldershot. And on 30th June the British Government announced an arms embargo on the Zionist state, adding that other EEC members were following suit, though without making formal declarations.

On 17th June, following two days of talks in Vienna between Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky and French President Mitterand, a joint statement was issued calling for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, the restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty, and respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Shortly before the French President's arrival, Chancellor Kreisky told newsmen



that Menachem Begin's government was 'semi-fascist', and warned that the invasion of Lebanon could lead to a wider conflict involving the superpowers.

Condemnation of the invasion, and support for the rights of the Palestinians have also come in a series of statements from the Vatican. Addressing 35,000 pilgrims in St Peter's Square on 27th June, Pope John Paul II called for recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, so that they could have a 'homeland'. Referring to the slaughter in Lebanon, he said that the Palestinians were 'no less dear to me' than other peoples. Two days later, he reiterated his call for Palestinian self-determination in a homeland of their own.

The European Parliament has also expressed its anger at Israel, on 18th June passing a resolution sharply condemning the invasion and calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces. Voting was 106 to 90, but the minority opposed the motion only because it implicitly equated the Zionist invasion forces with the Palestinian and Lebanese guerrillas fighting in self-defence. Reporting the debate on 18th June, *The Guardian* noted: 'Almost every member who spoke condemned the Israeli attacks on civilians and favoured the establishment of a Palestinian state.'

UNITED KINGDOM

Westminster parties condemn Israel

□ *SPOKESMEN FOR each of the major political parties, on both sides of the House, have condemned Israeli invasion of Lebanon during debates in the Commons. All stressed the role of the PLO and the Palestinians' right to self-determination.*

MEMBERS OF Parliament from all main parties have roundly condemned the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, stressing that it had done nothing to resolve the key issue in the Middle East conflict: Israel's denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in a state of their own in Palestine. There was also unanimity amongst key party and Government ▸

▷ spokesmen on the need for the PLO to play a full role in peace negotiations.

Opening a debate on the Middle East on 22nd June, Foreign Secretary Francis Pym described the invasion as 'a major set-back to prospects for a lasting peace in the region'. He went on to refute in detail Israel's pretexts for the savage onslaught. MPs were reminded that it had been Israel, and not the PLO, that had broken the ceasefire in south Lebanon.

Mr Pym dismissed Israel's claim that a 'new political order' was needed in Lebanon, saying: 'It would be quite wrong for Israel to impose her own preferred solution on Lebanon by armed force. And what is more it would not work.'

The Foreign Secretary scorned Israeli hopes of 'destroying the PLO'. The PLO, he affirmed, 'enjoys wide support among Palestinians throughout the Middle East,' and Israel 'cannot destroy the entire Palestinian people'.

Mr Pym stressed that the crucial issue in the Middle East conflict was Palestinian self determination, and that the PLO should play a full role in negotiations. Declaring his disillusion with Camp David, he said: 'It cannot lead to a long term solution unless it leads on to negotiations involving authentic Palestinian representatives.'

He stressed that the Government's view, shared by other EEC members, was that 'the Palestinian problem can be settled only by an overall peace settlement which takes account of the Palestinians' right to determine their own future'.

Banana republic

Referring to the Lebanese invasion as 'one of the great human tragedies of our time', Shadow Foreign Secretary Denis Healey scorned Israel's objectives in Lebanon, saying: 'To attempt to create a Christian banana republic, kept alive by wealthy European tourists as an Israeli satellite, is doomed to failure.'

He too described Camp David, saying: 'The extent of Arab aspirations that are currently attainable on the West Bank falls hopelessly short of what is needed to satisfy either the Palestinian people or the rest of the Arab world.' There was growing evidence, he added, that Israel was moving towards outright annexation of the 1967 occupied territories. He declared: 'The Camp David process is dead, and with it we see the death of what remains of American policy in the area.'

Mr Healey was also adamant that Palestinian self-determination lay at the heart of the Middle East conflict, and that Zionist invasion of Lebanon would not alter that. 'The destruction of the PLO as a military force in the Lebanon has not killed and cannot kill the desire of the Palestinian people for self determination,' he said, adding: 'What self determination means is land where they can have a state. It is idle to deceive ourselves that anything else will satisfy the Palestinians.'

Mr Healey insisted that the Palestinians 'cannot for ever be shunted from one foreign country to another in a macabre game of pass the parcel'.

Stressing the centrality of the PLO in any negotiations leading to a peace settlement,

he referred to the need for involvement by 'authentic representation of the Palestinian people'.

Pretexts

Echoing the sentiments of other speakers, Liberal leader David Steel described the invasion as 'horrifying', and said: 'We know that the Israelis were looking for a pretext for the invasion. The invasion of Lebanon was clearly planned.'

Mr Steel also declared Camp David

'dead', and affirmed that 'The key issue is whether we accept the right of the Palestinians to self determination and territory on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.' Self determination, he stressed, 'must come'.

The Liberal leader also testified to the wide support for the PLO amongst the Palestinian people, saying: 'The more one travels round the Middle East, the more one finds that Palestinians believe that the PLO must act as their voice.'

WESTMINSTER

Pym calls for Palestinian state

□ *BRITAIN'S FOREIGN Secretary Francis Pym has been forthright in his condemnation of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The only answer to the Middle East conflict is the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.*

FOREIGN SECRETARY Francis Pym has called openly for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and has condemned the Zionist invasion of Lebanon as a premeditated act of aggression.

Speaking on BBC Television's *Newsnight* programme on 16th June, Mr Pym declared that the invasion had been 'grotesquely' disproportionate in relation even to Israel's stated pretexts for the onslaught. He added that the invasion had

'quite obviously been planned over a long period of time'.

Scorning Zionist assertions that they wanted a 'withdrawal of all foreign forces' from Lebanon, Mr Pym said: 'I certainly don't think the Israelis have a right to claim anything about withdrawal from anybody, because they've shown no sign of doing that themselves. Indeed, they've shown the most offensive, aggressive action in a very well planned way, which has brought the most devastating results to the unhappy people of Lebanon.'

Mr Pym sharply rebuked Israel for having ignored UN Security Council Resolutions calling for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Zionist forces, saying: 'There is not the slightest indication that the Israelis have any intention whatsoever' of complying.

The Foreign Secretary reaffirmed that Palestinian self determination in Palestine was the key to peace in the Middle East. He said that the British Government, together with the EEC, 'fully supports the right of Palestinians to self ▷

PLO leader has talks at the Foreign Office



Head of PLO political department Farouk Qaddoumi

IN AN important development in relations between the PLO and the British government, the head of the organisation's Political Department, Farouk Qaddoumi, met in early July with Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It was the first time that a British Government Minister had officially received a top PLO official.

Mr Qaddoumi discussed the situation in Lebanon with Mr Hurd, pressing the British Government to use its position as a member of the Security Council to push for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

Mr Qaddoumi later met with Michael Foot and Denis Healey, leader and Foreign Affairs spokesman of the Labour Party, and with David Steel and Roy Jenkins, leaders of the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties.

Talking to journalists at a breakfast meeting in London, Mr Qaddoumi said that the tough resistance by the PLO forces in Lebanon had meant that organisation had moved forward five years on the diplomatic front, because of the increased recognition of the legitimacy of the Palestinian case that has ensued. 'Politically we are victorious,' he said.

He also stressed that the PLO forces were a guerrilla army, not a conventional army, and were able to re-group to fight again. Any negotiations concerning the PLO's military presence in Beirut did not affect the right of the PLO to maintain forces elsewhere in Lebanon, he said, particularly in the Bekaa valley, and in north and central Lebanon.

The London visit was part of a tour of capitals of Security Council members.

▷ determination, which means that land ought to be provided for them so that they can have a state'.

The United States, Mr Pym continued, 'does not take such a positive view about it as we do, or the [European] community'. He urged the White House to enter direct negotiations with the PLO, something which the US has promised Israel it will not do pending Palestinian recognition of the Zionist state. Asked whether Israel might then accuse Washington of having granted recognition to the PLO, the Foreign Secretary replied: 'So be it, so be it.'

Emergency group on Lebanon formed

A BROADLY-based group, the Emergency Committee against the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon (ECAIL), has been formed to co-ordinate protests in Britain against the Zionist aggression. The group, which includes MPs from all parties, is pressing for four basic demands: an immediate ceasefire, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon; the application to Palestinian prisoners of the Geneva Conventions on Prisoners of War; respect for UN Resolutions, and in particular Resolutions 508 and 509, which call for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Zionist forces; and for unbiased coverage of the conflict by the media.

Speaking at ECAIL's inaugural meeting in the House of Commons on 25th June, the Committee's Chairman, Dundee West MP Ernie Ross, said: 'The very grave threat to world peace posed by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the disregard by Israel of UN Security Council Resolutions 508 and 509, and the evident attempt by Israel to eliminate the Palestinian people, both militarily and politically, require a powerful, considered and unified response from all friends and supporters of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.'

Those attending the inaugural meeting of the Committee included Mr Nabil Ramlawi, London Representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Lord Bruce of Donnington, Lord Malloy, and MPs David Watkins, Frank Hooley, Peter Lloyd, Stan Newens and Tony Marlow.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Labour Middle East Council, the Conservative Middle East Council, the All Party UK Palestine Parliamentary Group, Plaid Cymru, the Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding, the Arab Women's Association, Liberation, the National Organisation of Labour Students, the General Union of Palestinian Students, the Irish Friends of Palestine, the Trade Union Friends of Palestine, the British Peace Assembly, the National League of Young Liberals, the Political Committee of the Co-operative Retail Society, London Region, the London Friends of Palestine, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, the Palestinian Women's Group, the Birmingham Friends of Palestine, the League of Arab States, the Union of Liberal Students, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Transport and General Workers Union.

PLO COMMENT

Beigin's 'final solution'



Nabil Ramlawi addresses a meeting in London

□ **ISRAEL'S INVASION** of Lebanon was denounced as 'a crime against humanity' when the London Representative of the PLO, Mr Nabil Ramlawi, spoke at a press conference in London on 14th June.

'WHAT IS happening in the Lebanon today is nothing less than systematic genocide—the execution of a plan for the mass extermination of the Palestinian people and the attempted destruction of the Palestinian people as a nation,' declared Mr Nabil Ramlawi, the PLO's London Representative, at a press conference on 14th June.

He added: 'You are witnessing Beigin's "final solution" to the Palestine question. It is a military solution to a human tragedy, demanding the elimination of the Palestinian people.'

Affirming the PLO 'cannot be destroyed as a force because it is the Palestinian people, the voice of four million Palestinians,' Mr Ramlawi asked: 'How does Beigin propose to subjugate four million people and silence their demands for their legitimate rights?'

Ceasefire

The PLO Representative stressed that, in order to save civilian lives, Palestinian forces had accepted a ceasefire, based on UN Resolutions 508 and 509, which call for Israel's immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon. Israel, however, 'uses ceasefires as part of her military strategy, to prepare for a new attack, or to consolidate occupation of foreign territory,' he said. Mr Ramlawi nevertheless added: 'On behalf of the PLO I want you to know that we support a ceasefire that is based on Resolutions 508 and 509.'

Mr Ramlawi confirmed that, contrary to

the claims of Israeli military spokesmen, Palestinian forces were stubbornly resisting the invaders. 'Israeli forces are in Lebanon, but Lebanon has not submitted to Israeli occupation,' he declared. 'We are still resisting on every front, in every town, street by street and valley by valley.'

'So long as Israeli forces remain on Lebanese territory, and directed against the Palestinian and Lebanese people, we assert our right to self defence,' said Mr Ramlawi.

Israel, he continued, had sealed off south Lebanon to outside observers since it 'does not want the world to see what is happening, because it is a crime against humanity, it is the second holocaust'.

Also, Mr Ramlawi said, 'Israel does not want the world to see how we are resisting and fighting'. He added: 'The Palestinian and Lebanese people of southern Lebanon are fighting for their survival.'

'The Israelis call it "mopping-up operations". We call it genocide,' said Mr Ramlawi. 'It is a crime against humanity which the world is watching as our people die. I declare that the response of the international community, and its failure to respond with anything more than diplomatic statements of "concern" is no less of a crime than the murder of our people.'

US collusion

The PLO Representative had particularly sharp words for the Reagan administration, declaring: 'It is beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Israelis could never have undertaken such a barbarous process of systematic genocide without the full knowledge and approval of the United States.'

He continued: 'It is just as clear that the Reagan administration has no intention of exerting the necessary pressure on their "protégé" to bring about any ceasefire until their plan is fully accomplished.'

He added: 'The Israeli invasion has clearly evidenced the fact that the Reagan administration has no other policy in the Middle East but that offered by Beigin.'

Mr Ramlawi said, however, that West European governments also bore a heavy responsibility for the slaughter in Lebanon. They 'cannot simply content themselves with verbal statements,' he declared. 'They must act immediately to stop the bloodshed before it is too late.'

Affirming that 'the recent developments in the Middle East have made the region more dangerously explosive than ever,' Mr Ramlawi declared: 'The Palestinian and Arab peoples can no longer tolerate being forced to choose between the occupation of their lands or their physical liquidation.'

Recent events, he continued, had exposed 'the total moral bankruptcy of Zionism and the Israeli government'. Israel, he concluded, had no intention of considering any solution to the Palestinian question except the annihilation of the Palestinian people, along with their Lebanese brothers'.



Dekwaneh refugee camp in Beirut before the invasion

BACKGROUND

The Palestinians in Lebanon: Reluctant self-protection

□ **ISRAELI PROPAGANDA** accuses the PLO of deliberately destabilising Lebanon. However, this study reveals that over many years the Palestinians have been the target of Zionist intrigues in Lebanon.

'ONE OF the most cynical 'justifications' used by the Israeli government and its would-be Bonaparte, General Sharon, for the invasion of Lebanon has been that if it seeks to rid the country of its Palestinian presence. This, the Israelis, their allies, the Lebanese Phalangist Party, and their apologists claim, has been responsible for the civil strife that has wracked Lebanon over the past decade. The truth, as with other aspects of this latest Israeli-Palestinian war, is vastly different.

The Palestinians, now comprising around twenty per cent of the country's population, have been in Lebanon since 1948 — not at their own choice, but because they were driven from their homes in Palestine by the emerging Israeli state and by Zionist organisations of terror, such as the Irgun Zvei Leumi, led by current Israeli Premier Menachem Begin. Even after the emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as their political representative in the late 1960s, the Palestinians sought to avoid involvement in Lebanese politics. The Cairo agreement of 1969, which regulated the PLO's presence, provided for the opening of Palestinian political offices, their maintenance of security within the refugee camps, within the overall framework of Lebanese sovereignty, and for the Lebanese army and security forces to control security elsewhere.

Unfortunately, however, the Lebanese army was then controlled by the Maronite Christian militias of the Frangieh family, the National Liberal Party, of Camille Chamoun, who had invited the United States to intervene in 1958 to preserve his position as President, and the Phalange Party, modelled on the Italian fascists when it was founded in the 1930s, and led

by Pierre Gemayel and his son Beshir. These groups, traditionally dominant in Lebanese society and politics, had seen their power come under increasing threat during the 1950s and 1960s, due to internal Lebanese factors, including large-scale Christian emigration and the more rapid population growth of Lebanon's Moslems. If they were to hold on to the political control they had previously enjoyed, they needed to prevent a Moslem political resurgence, and attacks on the Palestinian presence — both Palestinian Moslems and Christians — was seen as part of their campaign to cling on.

In 1972, the Israelis sent troops into Beirut to attack Palestinian leaders in their homes. Three were killed, including one, Kamal Nasser, whose home was opposite a Lebanese army barracks. The army made no move to prevent the attack. After angry clashes between Palestinian forces and the army that followed, it was agreed between the PLO and the Government that Palestinian forces could guard their own offices, as well as the refugee camps.

In 1975, the Lebanese civil war broke out — sparked off by an attack on a bus carrying Palestinian civilians by a unit of the Phalangist militia. Twenty-nine Palestinians were killed. The Lebanese Prime Minister, Riad el Solh, from the Moslem community, accused Israel of trying to interfere in the crisis, and Israeli arms and ammunition were captured from Phalangist forces, the first hard evidence of what has since become an open alliance.

Despite this, however, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat reaffirmed his belief that the Palestinians should stay out of internal Lebanese politics — a statement that was welcomed by Camille Chamoun. Twenty-four hours later, Maronite forces shelled the PLO political headquarters in Beirut, and, against their will, the Palestinians were drawn into the conflict.

Confident of their backing from Israel, the Maronites continued their attacks. Part of their strategy, conducted in asso-

ciation with the Israelis, was the creation of a zone free from Palestinian and Lebanese Moslem forces in the South, where the Lebanese Army deserter Major Saad Haddad established his own Israeli-armed, financed and trained militia force.

The military situation was frozen towards the end of 1976, following the entry of Syrian peacekeeping forces, who had been invited in by the Lebanese Government. First striking at the Maronites to prevent them gaining the upper hand, the Syrians then turned on the Palestinians and the Lebanese Moslems, to prevent them doing the same. An uneasy co-existence was established.

The Maronite leadership, however, was unwilling to accept this freezing of the situation, and so was its Israeli ally. In late 1976, and again in the summer of 1977, Camille Chamoun and Pierre Gemayel met with Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin and other top Israeli officials to discuss further co-operation. One subject on the agenda was the prevention of the implementation of a new Lebanese-Palestinian agreement, made at Chtoura early in 1977, under which the Palestinian forces would withdraw from the cities, and the Lebanese army would resume control in the South. The Maronites and the Israelis had other plans, as became apparent the next year.

In 1978, the Israelis invaded south Lebanon. When they withdrew, having failed to eradicate the Palestinian presence, they left behind a greatly strengthened Saad Haddad. Meanwhile, in the rest of Lebanon, the major Maronite militia, that of the Phalangist party, moved to strengthen its control over the whole of the Maronite community.

Recognising Arab political realities, the Frangiehs had begun to distance themselves from the Phalangist-Israeli alliance, and had restored good relations with Syria. In June 1978, Phalangist forces attacked the Frangieh family stronghold, killing Tony Frangieh and virtually destroying the Frangieh militia. In other, less bloody moves, the militia of the National Liberal Party was also destroyed, leaving Camille Chamoun as little more than a political voice. Pierre Gemayel and his son Beshir emerged as pre-eminent among the Maronite political and military leaders, secure in their knowledge of continued military and other support from the Israelis.

Right: Captured PLO guerrillas in Sidon: Israel hopes to subjugate West Bank Palestinians after the destruction of Beirut (Camera)

The Gemayels subsequently consistently refused to break these links with Israel — and without that, none of the Lebanese Moslem groups, whether traditionally-orientated or leftist, were prepared to discuss the effective recreation of a central authority. Nor were the Palestinians prepared to withdraw to the refugee camps, leaving their civilian populations in the towns at the mercy of the Phalangist militia. The public co-operation between the Israelis and the Phalangists, carried on with the encouragement of the United States, through people such as the US special mediator, Philip Habib, himself of Lebanese Maronite origin, gave the Palestinians and the Lebanese left the feeling that they faced a threat on two fronts — from the north, through the Phalangists, and from the south, through the Israelis and the Saad Haddad militia.

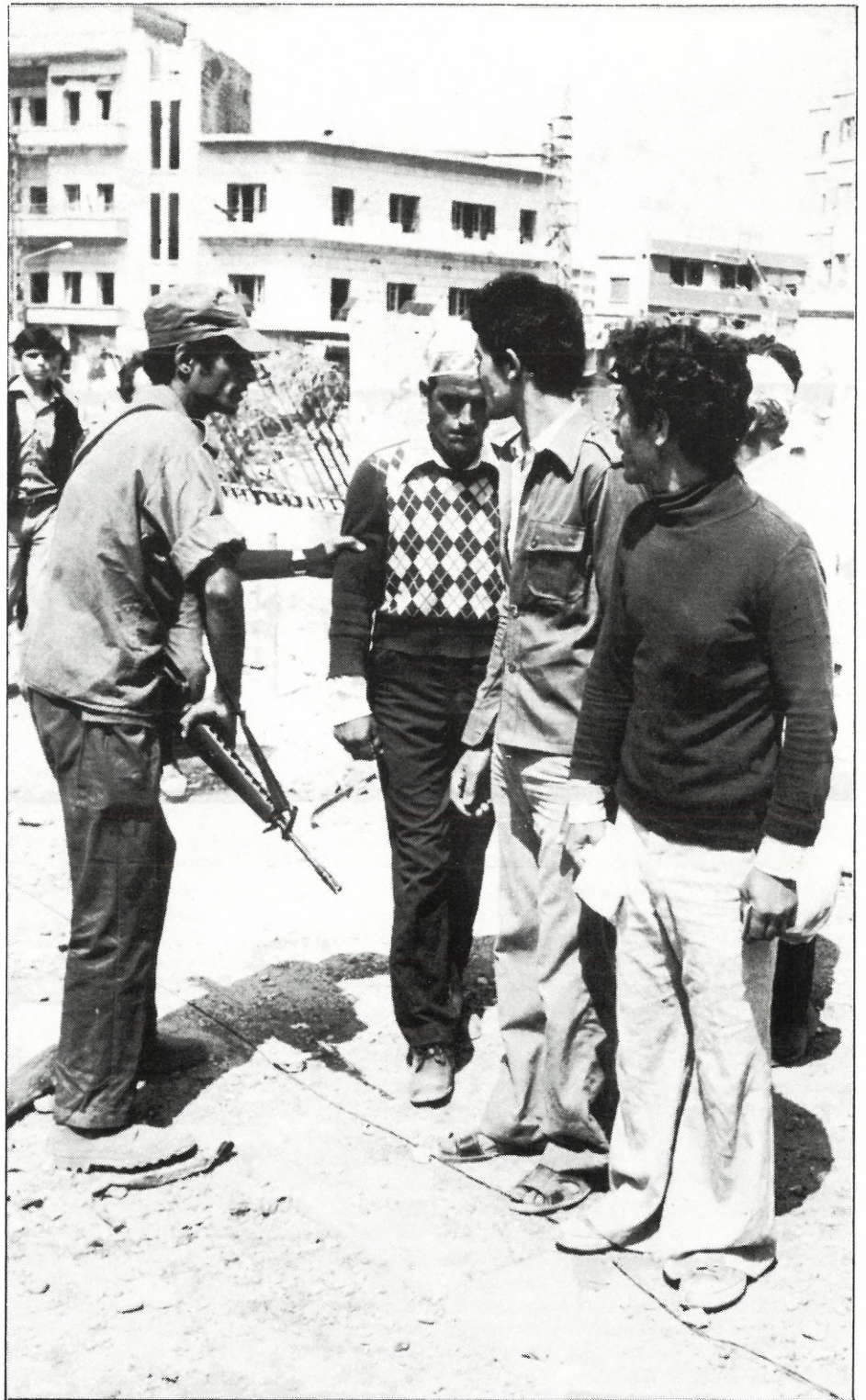
There was continual evidence, however, of the reality of this dual threat. During the massive Israeli air and artillery attacks on southern Lebanon in mid-1981, the Phalangist militia took the opportunity to try to grab control of strategic territory in central Lebanon.

Recent events indicate that the Israeli-Phalangist collaboration extends to plans for the future of Lebanon. General Sharon met with Beshir Gemayel early this year to discuss plans for action. Upon the launching of the invasion, both Saad Haddad, and Gemayel took the opportunity to become involved. Since the Israeli occupation of Damour, south of Beirut, for example, Phalangist units have been permitted to move into the city.

The history of the Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon is one of unsuccessful attempts to avoid being drawn into involvement in Lebanese internal affairs. The Phalangists and their Israeli allies have, for more than ten years, devoted their efforts to ensuring that the PLO cannot maintain the non-involvement it has always sought.

The responsibility for the deaths and destruction that now characterise the whole of southern Lebanon, therefore, lies not at the door of the Palestinians and of the PLO, but at the doors of the Israelis and the Phalangists. They have had mutually interlocking objectives — the Israelis to destroy the Palestinian presence and to create a client state run by the Phalange, and the Phalangists to crush attempts by the Lebanese Moslems to gain a fair share of political power, and, incidentally, to smash the Palestinian presence. After ten years of planning and preparation, the Israelis and Phalangists now hope they are close to achieving their goal.

They have, however, forgotten one key fact. It is physically impossible to liquidate the Palestinian people, and their Lebanese allies, and politically impossible to destroy the PLO, inside Lebanon, or anywhere else.



ISRAEL'S STRATEGY

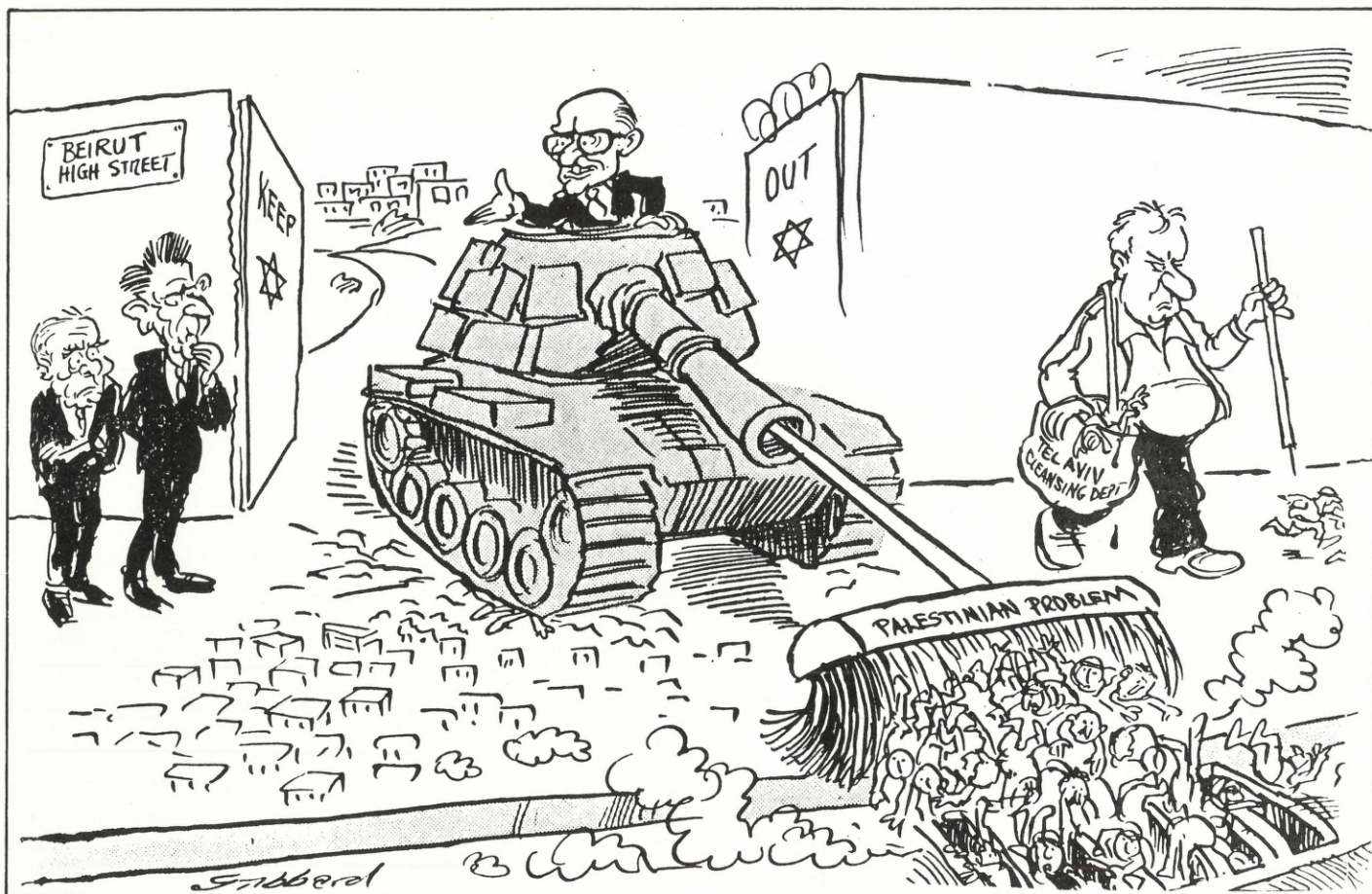
Lebanon invasion to secure West Bank

□ *ISRAEL'S INVASION of Lebanon was seen by the Zionist leadership as essential to pave the way for the annexation of the occupied Arab territories on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.*

'THE BIGGER the blow is and the more we damage the PLO infrastructure the more the Arabs [in the West Bank] and Gaza will be ready to negotiate with us and establish co-existence.' With this admission to *Time* magazine on 14th June,

Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon revealed the true motive for Israel's carnage in Lebanon.

Israel is the victim of an elaborate conspiracy theory of its own making. Menachem Beigin and his extremist colleagues believe that the stubborn resistance to the occupation by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza is orchestrated by the PLO. They believe that eliminating the PLO will ease the way for implementing their declared policy of annexing the 1967 occupied territories. ▸



"... as the ancient Rabbi said, Mr Reagan cleanliness is next to godliness!"

▷ Israel conveniently overlooks the fact that, regardless of events in Lebanon, the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will not abandon their demand for independence and statehood any more than their fellow Palestinians living as refugees in exile from their homeland. West Bankers oppose the occupation because it denies them their legitimate national rights, not because of 'intimidation' or 'orders' from the PLO.

Israel intends to annex the West Bank and Gaza under cover of the Camp David accords. Camp David provided for the administration of the 1967 occupied territories by an 'autonomous' Palestinian council. But its powers would be restricted to matters such as refuse collection, and Zionist occupation forces would anyway remain in the regions. Palestinians have firmly and consistently rejected the autonomy scheme as a ploy for continued occupation, leading to annexation. Their worst fears have been confirmed by Beigin's declaration that 'autonomy' would apply to people, but not to their land.

Collaborators

In a futile bid to make its occupation regime more acceptable, Israel last year introduced a sham 'civilian' administration to supervise the West Bank and Gaza. All its members are in fact army officers. The inauguration of the 'civilian' regime marked a dangerous new phase in the occupation. The regime's boss, Colonel Menachem Milson, is assiduously attempting to neutralise the elected and authentic local Palestinian leadership, which supports the PLO. At the same time, he is trying to create a compliant 'alternative' leadership. Israeli-sponsored and

financed village leagues, headed by collaborators, are a key element in Milson's plans. His hope is that village league leaders will eventually become members of the 'autonomous' Palestinian council called for by Camp David.

On 20th June the *Jerusalem Post* reviewed an interview Ariel Sharon gave to Israel radio, in which he confirmed suspicions that the invasion of Lebanon was merely the prelude to a period of heightened repression in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, when the occupation authorities will step up efforts to impose the autonomy scheme. 'Sharon said that he believed the Arabs of Judea, Samaria (as the Zionists term the West Bank) and Gaza would soon be ready to start negotiations with Israel,' the *Jerusalem Post* said. 'Sharon told the army radio that as soon as the military situation quietened down, Israel would start a peace offensive, a concentrated effort to achieve autonomy in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.'

The paper added: 'Sharon said the more the PLO leadership in Beirut was suppressed, the better the chances for negotiations with the Arabs of the territories.'

To ram home the message, Mustapha Dudin, who heads the Hebron area village league, told Israel radio on 19th June that the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would stabilise soon, and that there would then be a chance for peace talks.

The first moves in Sharon's 'peace offensive' in the West Bank came soon after Israeli troops first poured north into Lebanon. On 15th June civilian administrator Colonel Menachem Milson dismissed the elected municipal councils of

the West Bank towns of Nablus and Dura (near Hebron). A military officer was appointed to replace the Nablus municipal council. In Dura, an 'ad hoc committee' was installed, headed by Abdul Fatah Dudin, brother of Mustapha.

The move followed the dissolution in March of the elected council of the West Bank town of El Bireh, and the dismissal of the elected Mayors of Nablus and Ramallah. All three Mayors were placed under house or town arrest.

Defiance

Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories have not, however, been cowed by the Zionist onslaught in Lebanon. From the first day of the invasion, there have been widespread and angry demonstrations and commercial strikes in solidarity with the PLO. On 7th June the *Daily Telegraph* announced: 'Eighteen Arabs were arrested in Jenin in the West Bank when demonstrators threw petrol bombs at Israeli army vehicles. Earlier, the Palestinian flag was raised over Herod's Gate in the old [Arab] city of Jerusalem, and demonstrators shouted anti-Israel slogans.' Ramallah was the scene of further major protests on the first day of the Zionist attack.

The protests reached a new pitch following the fatal shooting on 11th June of a young Palestinian demonstrator in Nablus. The occupation forces had employed their by now routine procedure of firing point-blank into the crowds.

A solid commercial strike throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip started on 13th June. More protesters were wounded when Zionist troops opened fire to break up demonstrations. The occupation regime forcibly closed the Palestinian uni-

versities in Nablus and Bethlehem. It was the first enforced closure of Bethlehem's Vatican-sponsored university since it opened in 1973.

In another bid to stifle Palestinian nationalist sentiment the Zionists banned the circulation in the West Bank and Gaza of nationalist Arabic-language newspapers published in occupied East Jerusalem.

If Israel hoped that the slaughter in Lebanon would crush Palestinian morale, and support for the PLO, in the West Bank and Gaza, it badly miscalculated. On 17th June the *Financial Times* commented: 'So far the mood on the West Bank has been hardened against Israel by the war in Lebanon. The Palestinians there, far from being cowed, are sounding more defiant than ever.'

WESTERN MEDIA

The Economist examines Zionist strategy on the West Bank

□ ONE OF the few details analyses of Zionist activities on the occupied West Bank in the western media appeared on 15th May in *The Economist*. The London weekly predicts that the Israelis will attempt a mass expulsion of the Palestinians to clear the way for annexation.

THE RECENT wave of Palestinian protest demonstrations that rocked the 1967 occupied territories following the dismissal of the elected Mayors of Nablus, Ramallah and El Bireh received wide coverage in the media. But few journals have put the individual acts of Israeli repression into an overall context. *The Economist* is an exception, and on 15th May carried a detailed analytical report from a special correspondent in Jerusalem, which concluded that Israel's savagery on the West Bank is directed towards a very specific end: the expulsion of the Palestinian population to clear the way for annexation.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip 'face an alarming change in Israel's occupation policy,' *The Economist* said. It has 'developed since Mr Ariel Sharon became minister of defence after the re-election of Mr Menachem Begin's Likud coalition last year. Earlier ministers of defence were tough on disturbers of the peace: the Labour party, no less than Likud, pursued a colonisation policy which on the Palestinians' angry reckoning now takes up more than a third of the West

Bank's sliver of land. The new development is Mr Sharon's explicit resolve to make the Palestinians under occupation conform to the pattern he has set, or go and live somewhere else — and the methods he is prepared to countenance to implement this policy.

The Economist continued: 'Mr Sharon's attitude has given the green light to a minority fringe in Israeli society — some ultra-nationalist settlers and their think-alikes in the army — to embark on a pattern of behaviour that seems to be bent on frightening or bullying the Palestinians into leaving. The intimidation takes several forms, not all of which can be traced to Israeli soldiers; for instance, people claim that an extremist Israeli group is behind the anonymous "death letters" that these days are falling through the letter boxes of many respected (and moderate) Palestinian leaders, but nothing has been proved. More sinister, but still unproven, are the recent stories of the kidnapping of Palestinian youngsters by Israeli settlers; two young Palestinians were found dead in the fields in April, one beheaded, the other cut in two, and the medical evidence does not seem to accord with the view that they killed themselves — as some young Palestinians have done — with their own explosives.'

'What is known for certain is that some settlers and more soldiers have been firing live bullets into crowds of young demonstrators and, despite the anguish of many Israelis, getting away with it,' the report said.

Youths shot

The Economist pointed out: 'The Palestinians are mostly armed only with stones (though in Gaza they are beginning to collect smuggled arms and explosives). And even with stones, plus signposts and catapults, they can and do hurt passing Israelis. Two Israeli soldiers were killed in March, one stabbed to death, one killed by a grenade in Gaza. But the Israeli soldiers who rush to the scene of a demonstration are often not armed with the usual riot-control equipment; they have no shields, visors or water cannon and, sometimes, no tear gas or rubber bullets. They have submachine guns and they fire them, first in the air and then, on increasingly frequent occasions, straight at the young rioters. Over the past month, at least 10 young Palestinians have been killed by the security forces; in addition, one girl was shot last week by civilians from a passing car, and two Palestinians were killed on the Dome of the Rock on 11th April, one by an American-born Israeli soldier, Mr Alan Goodman, and one probably by the security forces quelling the subsequent riot. More than 100 Palestinians, some very old but more very young, have been wounded by bullet shots.'

Massacre feared

The Economist continued: 'Israel's chief of staff, General Rafael Eitan, last week defended the use of live ammunition against the demonstrators' legs as "a last resort". Your correspondent can bear witness that the last resort is sometimes

resorted to swiftly, and that the bullets hit the demonstrators in all parts of their bodies, not just their legs. Some thoughtful Israelis, doing their military service, bring back stories of the unthinking brutality towards Arabs of a few of their fellow-reservists; a group of reserve officers held a press conference in Jerusalem on Monday to record their concern at the way things are developing. Some thoughtful Palestinians, unable to draw breath until their young are home from school or the streets, are beginning to fear that none of this is casual. Their nightmare is that present events are calculated along the same lines as those that led to the massacre of groups of Palestinian civilians in 1948 (the best known was at Deir Yassin near Jerusalem) which helped to encourage the flight of nearly 750,000 Palestinians.'

This fear, said *The Economist*, has been 'helped by the presence in the senior ranks of the government of some of the organisers of the 1948 killings', a reference to Zionist premier Beigin, who led the terrorist Irgun group, and to foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir, who was one of the triumvirate that headed the notorious Stern Gang.

'The question that moderate middle-class middle-aged Palestinians now ask one another are no longer about autonomy but about the continuation of their lives in the place where they have always lived,' *The Economist* said.

'Most still say that, come what will, they will never again flee their homes. Others say the same thing but with quavering. (In the West Bank present emigration just about matches natural growth, with the population stabilised at about 800,000, including east Jerusalem; the population of the Gaza Strip, where the density is four times that of Holland, is still growing and is thought to be around 500,000.) Palestinians suspect that the Israelis want to uproot their leaders — extremist, moderate, religious, whatever — and leave behind a leaderless compliant rump rather like the Israeli Arabs in Israel's first years,' the report added.

Divide and rule

Since last November, and the introduction of the 'civilian administration' headed by Colonel Menachem Milson, Israel has assiduously pursued a divide and rule policy, but it has backfired, said *The Economist*.

'The methods were not subtle. The dismissal in March of three nationalist mayors brought their moderate peers — and sometimes opponents — rallying to their cause. The moderates themselves were then harassed, intimidated and punished. The village leagues, which Mr Milson envisaged as an alternative source of authority to the PLO and the West Bank's elected municipalities (all of which, though with varying degrees of conviction, see themselves as part of the PLO's constituency), are collapsing mainly because of the low calibre of the appointed leaguers. Some West Bankers still use the leagues because this is the only way they can get a permit for, say, family reunification, but the signed-up member number only a few hundred and the

number is dropping,' the report pointed out.

The Economist dismissed the 'civilian administration' as a sham. 'The civil administration installed in November is a disingenuous business. Mr Milson wears a suit, but most of the civil administrators are army officers wearing army uniform. They sometimes work alongside the military governors; sometimes, as in Gaza, they are the same man. In towns where the elected mayor has been dismissed, a third army officer sits in the mayor's chair. Army officers are rotated around, and nobody, except perhaps Mr Milson, knows what the civil administration means.'

Life in the 1967 occupied territories, said *The Economist*, goes on 'against the all-too-normal background of land expropriation and economic squeeze'.

'The seizure of scarce land, and scarce water, and the building of new towns and settlements with roads to link them, bolster the Israelis against their almost universal fear of a Palestinian state, or a truly autonomous homeland, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One of the reasons for the traumatic razing of the

Israeli Sinai settlement at Yamit was to drive home the horror of Israel giving up land it has colonised: never again, came the message,' the report explained.

The Economist concluded by predicting that Israel hopes to depopulate the 1967 occupied territories as a prelude to annexation, since the incorporation of more than one million Palestinian Arabs into Israel would severely undermine the Jewish majority in the Zionist state.

'The Palestinians are either defiant or nervous, sometimes both. They know, because they are continually being told, that Israel's present government considers their land an integral part of Israel. They are clearly in the way: so long as they are there, in their present numbers and under their present leaders, the government will probably hold back from annexing the territory,' said the report. 'Annexing, as was revealed by the Golan Heights affair in December, means extending Israeli law to territory. But if Israeli law includes the law of representation, the Israelis would think twice before extending it to a people who amount to between a quarter and a third of Israel's own population.'

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Opinion polls confirm Palestinian support for PLO

□ *TWO RECENT surveys of Palestinian opinion on the occupied West Bank show overwhelming support for the PLO, and for an independent Palestinian state. One opinion poll was commissioned by Time magazine; the other was compiled and conducted by Al Najah University.*

NINETY-EIGHT per cent of Palestinians living under Zionist occupation want the establishment of a Palestinian state; at least three quarters, and possibly as many as 86 per cent, want that state to be led by the Palestine Liberation Organisation. These were the unambiguous findings of two opinion polls carried out among the Palestinians of the occupied West Bank during March and April.

One of the polls was conducted by the Israeli PORI Institute, based in Tel Aviv, which also surveys Israeli public opinion for newspapers such as *Ha'aretz*; it was published in *Time* magazine on 24th May. The other poll was carried out by Palestinians, from the Political Science Department of Al Najah University, headed by Abdel Sattar Kassim, and some of its findings appeared in the English language weekly edition of the Palestinian paper *Al Fajr* on 23rd April.

The polls are significant because they are the first test of Palestinian opinion since the municipal elections in 1976, in which supporters of the PLO swept to power in most of the villages and towns of the West Bank. Six of the Palestinian mayors elected in 1976 have been removed from office by the occupation authorities. Two were deported in 1980,

and four were dismissed earlier this year, helping to provoke the recent serious disturbances in the occupied territories.

The Israelis have steadfastly refused to hold elections since 1976. This has been partly because the Likud government, which has been in power since 1977, has been working on the incorporation of the occupied territories into Israel, and partly because the Israelis knew that any election would simply confirm the backing for the PLO among Palestinians. The strength of PLO support was acknowledged even by the Israelis' 'civilian' administrator on the West Bank, Colonel Menachem Milson, who has seen his principal task as the eroding of that support.

The polls were conducted according to the normal sampling methods. The PORI/Time poll had a sample of 441 people living in 58 West Bank towns, villages and refugee camps. The Al Najah/Al Fajr poll had a larger sample of 2,775 respondents representing a cross-section of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, chosen in eight geographical areas.

The field workers conducting both polls were subjected to 'intimidation by the Israelis. PORI was told that merely conducting the survey contravened laws forbidding the collection of data in the occupied territories except with the permission of the authorities, and the publication of material in sympathy or support of a hostile organisation. In addition, one of PORI's poll-takers was arrested, his data confiscated, and he was accused of membership of a 'terrorist group'. This data was not used in compiling the final results.

Several of the Al Najah students in-

volved in the University's poll were also arrested. The Israeli army seized 110 questionnaires. But equally, Mr Kassim reported that some of those given questionnaires did not fill them in because they feared the poll was an intelligence-gathering exercise by the Israelis. Hence the sample size of 2,775; 3,000 questionnaires were in fact distributed.

Similarity

The two polls show small discrepancies, but the conclusions are overwhelmingly similar, given that one poll, PORI, was taken by doorstep questioning, and the other by the distribution and later collection of forms, like the UK census.

The PORI poll showed that 59 per cent of those questioned wanted a Palestinian state in the whole of Palestine. This closely correlated with the total of those agreeing with the propositions in the Al Najah poll that a peaceful solution required the return of all Palestinians to their original property and possessions in Palestine and the creation of a population balance similar to that of 1918 — 32 per cent, and those opting for the return of the Palestinians to their homes and the creation of a state which would include Muslims, Jews and Christians — 24 per cent, a total of 57 per cent. The figure for those who believe that a West Bank-Gaza state would lead to a peaceful solution was 22 per cent in the Najah poll, 27 per cent in the PORI poll, a difference well within the limits of statistical error.

PLO should run state

The PORI poll found that 86 per cent of the sample wanted the PLO to run any future Palestinian state. The Al Najah poll asked 'If a solution to the Middle East can be achieved by Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, what would you prefer?' To this, 75 per cent answered that they would want the PLO to run the state. Second preference was for UN-supervised elections, chosen by eight per cent of the sample.

Results of the polls on the roles of the two super-powers were also similar. The PORI poll found that the Soviet Union was by far the most popular, 72 per cent choosing it as the country they most admired, in preference to the United States, which was the choice of one and a half per cent. The Al Najah poll found that 88 per cent thought that the United States was 'pro-Israel and cannot be trusted'. But this poll also analysed the reasons for the Soviet Union's popularity. 60 per cent thought that it 'supports the Arabs in its own interests', and only 16 per cent that 'it strongly supports the Arabs and Palestinian people'. Neither poll asked about opinions on European states.

Finally, there was overwhelming support for progressive policies in a future Palestinian state. 56 per cent of the PORI sample want a secular democratic state, though a large minority — 35 per cent — want an Islamic Republic. 57 per cent wanted socialism, and 16 per cent what they described as 'communism'.

Half those responding to the Al Najah poll thought that Palestine would be liberated one day; a further 27 per cent thought that the West Bank and Gaza would be.

...palestine news review...

2nd April

- The US vetoes a UN Security Council Resolution demanding that Israel reinstate the Palestinian municipal officials removed from their posts.
- Zionist troops open fire at unarmed demonstrators in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. Four protestors are wounded.

4th April

- Mr Ibrahim Sousse, PLO Representative in Paris firmly denies that the PLO was in any way involved in yesterday's killing in Paris of an Israeli diplomat.

5th April

- Israel lifts a six-week blockade of four villages in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights after failing to break a general strike in protest at the region's annexation.

7th April

- *The Times* announces that Sri Lanka has decided to grant full embassy status to the PLO Office in Colombo.

8th April

- An Israeli soldier shoots dead a 40-year old Palestinian mother who was working her family farm near the West Bank town of Ramallah.

9th April

- Palestinians stage further angry protests in the 1967 occupied territories. A petrol bomb is hurled at a Zionist military patrol in the centre of Bethlehem. In the town of Halhoul, Palestinians stone passing Israeli vehicles.

11th April

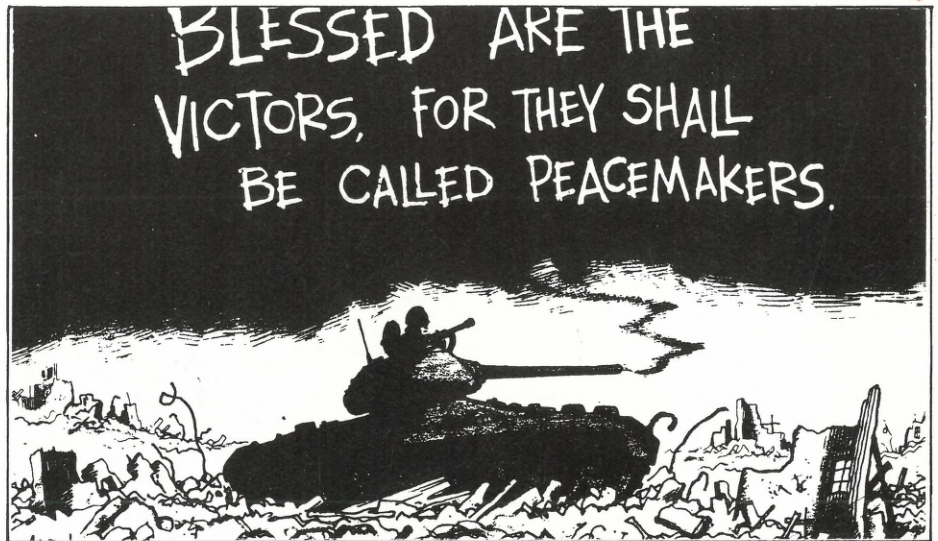
- An Israeli soldier opens fire at Palestinians in the compound of the Dome of the Rock in occupied East Jerusalem, killing two and wounding seven. The murders prompt widespread protest demonstrations in the 1967 occupied territories.

13th April

- Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories start a seven-day general strike, called by the Higher Muslim Council in Jerusalem to protest at yesterday's murder of two Palestinians by an Israeli soldier in the Holy City. The strike is accompanied by angry protests throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Zionist troops attempt to quell the demonstrations by firing at protesters, and attacking them with tear gas and batons.

13th April

- In another day of widespread angry protests in the 1967 occupied territories, prompted by the Easter Sunday killings in Jerusalem, Zionist troops again open fire at demonstrators, killing a seven-year old boy in occupied Gaza, and wounding fifty other Palestinians.



Israeli media turns to Palestine news agency for truth on war

THE ISRAELI government's credibility, even amongst its own soldiers, has been severely dented by its serious distortion and censorship of war news. Beigin has tried to conceal both Israel's aggressive designs in Lebanon, and the extent of the killing and destruction.

On 20th June the Daily Telegraph quoted Hirsch Goodman, the Jerusalem Post's military correspondent, as complaining: 'Censorship has never been more strict, and the army spokesmen less credible than before.'

He added: 'Things we had seen with our own eyes were subtly distorted. Thousands of Israeli troops who bear eyewitness to events no longer believe the army spokesmen.'

Goodman described an angry meeting with Zionist invasion troops in Lebanon, at which the soldiers accused reporters of 'covering up the truth, of lying to the public, of not reporting the real mood at the front and of being lackeys of the defence minister [Ariel Sharon]'. 'We were accused by the over-

whelming majority of the men, including senior officers, of allowing this war to grow out of all proportion to the original goals by mindlessly repeating official explanations we all knew were false,' said Goodman.

Confirmation of the Beigin government's misinformation campaign came in a Reuter report in The Scotsman on 1st July, which said: 'Military communiqués that blame the enemy for every flare-up in fighting, and disproved claims that Palestinian guerrilla chiefs are dead or seeking diplomatic asylum, have left many Israelis wondering how much to believe of what they are told.'

It continued: 'Every day, Israeli newspapers and radio stations have quoted reports from Lebanese stations and news agencies in Beirut to convey a general idea of how the war is going.'

The report noted: 'Even Wafa, the Palestinian news agency, has been used as a source by Israeli media, hungry for information and restricted by military censorship from providing a complete eye-witness account.'

14th April

- Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories stage further protests against the Zionist occupation. Ten protesters are shot and wounded by Israeli troops. Occupation forces attempt to break the solid commercial strike called in protest at the Jerusalem shootings. A number of the largest refugee camps and towns in the West Bank remain under strict curfew. Israel closes down all schools in the 1967 occupied territories.

15th April

- The commercial strike in the West Bank and Gaza Strip remains solid. Palestinians stage further protests against the

occupation. Zionist troops respond with gunfire, and wound at least four protesters in Gaza.

16th April

- Two Palestinians are killed and at least forty wounded when Zionist troops open fire on demonstrators in the occupied Gaza Strip.

18th April

- In another day of protests in the 1967 occupied territories, Israeli troops again fire at unarmed demonstrators, wounding several. A Palestinian from the Jabaliyeh refugee camp in Gaza dies after being beaten by soldiers. ▸

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▷ 19th April

□ Bir Zeit University on the occupied West Bank reopens after a two-months' closure enforced by the Zionist military authorities.

21st April

□ Israeli warplanes bomb Palestinian refugee camps along the Lebanese coast, killing at least 25 people and wounding scores. The attack marks the end of the ceasefire in the region agreed after last July's Palestinian-Israeli border war. During the air strikes, Israeli helicopters overfly a 50-mile stretch of the south Lebanese coast.

25th April

□ Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip mark the climax of the Egyptian-Israeli part of Camp David with widespread protest demonstrations and a general commercial strike. Israeli troops respond with tear gas and shots in the air.

□ Occupation forces in the Gaza Strip shoot and wound a Palestinian armed with a knife, who had attacked a military patrol.

26th April

□ Protest demonstrations erupt throughout the 1967 occupied territories, with Israeli troops responding with tear gas and batons, and firing into unarmed crowds. Curfews are imposed on six villages and towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

27th April

□ In another day of angry demonstrations by Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories, Israeli troops in the West Bank town of Nablus open fire, wounding two protesters.

28th April

□ Occupation forces shooting at Palestinian protesters in the West Bank and Gaza Strip wound at least 26 demonstrators, including a pregnant woman. A curfew is imposed on large parts of the West Bank city of Nablus.

29th April

□ Occupation forces firing on Palestinian demonstrators in the West Bank kill two protesters. A third dies from wounds received two weeks ago. At least thirty other demonstrators were wounded by Zionist gunfire.

30th April

□ Israeli occupation forces dismiss the elected Mayor of the West Bank town of Anabta, Mr Wahid Hamdallah. The move came after a military court found him guilty of possessing 'subversive' literature and violating a town arrest order.

1st May

□ Israeli troops open fire at Arab demonstrators in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, wounding two children.

2nd May

□ Zionist settlers open fire at a Palestinian demonstration near the West Bank town of Hebron, severely wounding a 12-year old girl.

3rd May

□ In Paris, three nuns and two priests, all of them French, begin a three-day hunger strike in support of the Pales-

Captured Israeli pilot praises PLO

AN ISRAELI pilot, shot down by Palestinian forces over Lebanon on 6th June and taken prisoner, has praised his captors' humanity, and revealed how his perception of the PLO has changed radically. His account of life as a prisoner of the Palestinians in Beirut contrasts sharply with Israel's savage treatment of Palestinian and Lebanese captives in southern Lebanon.

Speaking to the Irish Times on 29th June, Aharon Ahiaz stressed that he had no complaints about his treatment. 'I am like a guest in a Muslim family. It is unbelievable,' he declared, adding: 'I am not being tortured. I am living together with my guard, Moukhtar, in the same apartment. He is a friend of mine, not only for now but until the end of my life.'

The pilot disclosed how Palestinian guerrillas had saved his life after his plane was shot down. 'The farmers tried to kill me. But they stood between me and the farmers to save my life,' Ahiaz recalled.

Mr Ahiaz said that his attitude towards the PLO had been revolutionised during his captivity. Israeli propaganda habitually portrays the PLO as little more than a 'gang of terrorists', without any wide support amongst the Palestinian people as a whole. The pilot recorded his surprise at discovering the reality. 'I thought the population is not standing behind them, but the population is standing behind the PLO. It is a living organism,' he said.

While he criticised some Palestinian operations as 'terrorist', he stressed that the PLO 'is not a terrorist organisation'.

Stressing that he was not speaking under duress, Mr Ahiaz said: 'No one told me what to say.'

The captured Israeli pilot also expressed his horror at the scale of the death and destruction wrought in Lebanon by the Zionist invasion forces. 'I was crying in my heart when I saw on television what happened to the civilian population. I am not against war, but I am against such a war against civilian people.'

tinian people. The five will fast for the first two days at the Paris mosque and the third day at Notre Dame Cathedral.

4th May

□ Zionist troops firing at Palestinian demonstrators in the 1967 occupied territories kill a 17-year old schoolgirl, and severely injure six others.

□ An 11-year old Palestinian boy dies and an eight-year old boy is wounded at a refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip after the explosion of a booby trapped device planted by Zionists.

5th May

□ Four Palestinian teenagers in the West Bank die after a mystery explosion near the town of Jenin.

□ A 14-year old Palestinian girl shot in the head by Zionist settlers last Sunday dies in a Jerusalem hospital.

□ In another day of widespread demonstrations in the 1967 occupied territories, Israeli troops again use live ammunition against protesters, wounding six in the Gaza Strip.

6th May

□ Occupation forces close down a number of schools in the 1967 occupied territories as a collective punishment for the alleged participation of pupils in anti-Zionist demonstrations.

7th May

□ Zionist warplanes launch new assaults on Palestinians in Lebanon, killing at least eleven and wounding at least 30. Palestinian forces respond to the Israeli aggression by shelling unpopulated areas of northern Palestine, as a warning of their ability to retaliate.

10th May

□ The British government issues a statement condemning Israel's latest air attack on Lebanon as a 'further clear breach of the ceasefire, an infringement of Lebanese sovereignty and a dangerous escalation of the violence'.

14th May

□ Zionist premier Beigin admits that Israel has supplied \$100 million worth of arms to right-wing Phalangist forces in Lebanon.

□ Zionist chief of staff Rafael Eitan confirms that thousands of Israeli troops equipped with heavy armour, have massed and are on full alert along the Lebanese border, for a possible invasion.

15th May

□ A fifteen year old Palestinian is wounded when Zionist occupation forces fire into demonstrators in the West Bank town of Nablus.

16th May

□ Occupation forces open fire on Palestinian protestors in the village of Silwan,

...palestine news review...

near Ramallah on the West Bank, wounding one teenager.

□ The PLO calls for an Arab boycott of Zaire, in response to the African state's recent decision to restore diplomatic ties with the Zionist state, severed after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

17th May

□ Israel radio announces the start of a campaign to 'bring an additional 20,000 Jewish settlers to the Golan Heights'. The intention was first to fill 'vacant places in Golan kibbutzim, then vacant places in the moshavim [co-operative settlements], and finally expand urban settlements,' the radio added. At present there are about 8,000 Zionist settlers living illegally in the occupied Syrian region.

20th May

□ PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat starts a three-day visit to India.

21st May

□ It is reported that a PLO Information Office will shortly open in the New Zealand capital Wellington. A similar office is already being set up in the Australian city of Melbourne.

23rd May

□ Israel radio announces a new plan to settle 10,000 colonists in occupied East Jerusalem annually. They will join the estimated 60,000 already there.

24th May

□ PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat ends a one-day visit to Pakistan during which he held talks with President Zia al Huq, and Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan.

25th May

□ For the second successive day, Arabs in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights demonstrate against the recent arrest of nine residents at the weekend, on charges of 'inciting people to demonstrate'.
□ Zionist warplanes overflying Lebanon shoot down two Syrian fighters.

27th May

□ It is disclosed that the West Bank occupation forces have ordered the region's hospitals not to treat victims of Israeli army gunfire without permission, and only after the wounded have been interrogated by Zionist security officers.

1st June

□ Israel radio reports a decision to issue arms to collaborators amongst the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

3rd June

□ The PLO strongly denies any complicity in today's shooting of the Israeli ambassador in London.

□ Three teenage girls are killed in south Lebanon after accidentally detonating an Israeli cluster bomb that failed to explode during a Zionist air strike.

□ It is reported that Israel has arrested twenty Palestinians from the 1948 occupied territories, on charges of planning resistance operations in the Lydda-Ramleh area east of Tel Aviv.

4th June

□ Zionist war planes launch heavy air raids on Lebanon, killing 63 people and wounding 227.

5th June

□ Israel launches more massive air attacks on Lebanon, killing at least fifty people and wounding 150. Palestinian forces retaliate with heavy artillery barrages of northern Israel.

6th June

□ PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat returns to Beirut from Jeddah, where he had been holding talks with Saudi Arabian leaders.

9th June

□ Palestinian resistance fighters hurl a grenade at an Israeli military vehicle in the occupied Gaza Strip.

10th June

□ Angry demonstrations are reported by Palestinians in the occupied West Bank. Zionist troops shoot and wound one protester, and many more are injured by batons and tear gas.

11th June

□ Israel declares a total ban on all civilians, and 'especially journalists', from entering southern Lebanon.

14th June

□ PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat tours Palestinian positions in west Beirut.
□ The Soviet Union demands an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, warning Tel Aviv that its actions threatened Soviet interests.

15th June

□ Zionist occupation forces dismiss the elected council of the occupied West Bank town of Dura, near Hebron.

16th June

□ Zionist occupation authorities dismiss the town councils of Nablus and Ramallah on the West Bank.

17th June

□ Israeli agents murder two prominent Palestinian officials in Rome. Mr Kamal Hassan, Deputy Director of the Rome Office of the PLO was killed by a car bomb. In a separate incident, Mr Nazeh Matar, a medical student and another leading

figure in the PLO office, was shot dead outside his home.

□ The British Council of Churches issue a strong condemnation of the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, deploring 'the brutality of the attack, the scale of human suffering, and that most of the victims were innocent civilians'.

18th June

□ Two-thirds of UN member states boycott a speech to the world body by Zionist leader Menachem Beigin.

19th June

□ In a clear reference to Israel's obstruction of international relief efforts in Lebanon, the UN Security Council unanimously calls on all parties in the conflict to respect the rights of the civilian population and to assist in humanitarian efforts.

20th June

□ It is reported that Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department, has met in Paris with French Premier Pierre Mauroy. It is the first time that the French government has received such a high-ranking PLO official.

22nd June

□ PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat meets in Beirut with Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca.
□ Welcoming Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department, Greek Premier Andreas Papandreu condemns Israel for committing the same crimes against 'the heroic and proud Palestinian people' as the Nazis had perpetrated against the Jews in Europe.
□ A senior International Red Cross official in Cyprus says that Israel is continuing to block IRC relief supplies for south Lebanon.

25th June

□ The Socialist International issues a statement strongly condemning Israel's invasion of Lebanon, expressing its 'shock and deep sorrow' at 'the terrible loss and suffering inflicted on the civilian population of Lebanon'.

27th June

□ In an address to 35,000 pilgrims in St Peter's square Pope John Paul II calls for recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

30th June

□ Britain announces a formal arms sales embargo on the Zionist state, and says that it expects other EEC countries to follow suit.

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The PALESTINE Report



EDITORIAL

Why Israel lost the war

FEW PEOPLE would have predicted on 6th June, as 120,000 Israeli troops began to invade the Lebanon, that six weeks later the Palestinian forces would still be confronting the Zionists and resisting an assault on their positions in the capital, Beirut.

Few Israelis would have believed that, with the massive power of the American supplied military technology, the Beigin regime could actually lose the war.

Despite the massacre of an estimated 16,000 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, the injuries inflicted on many more, and the estimated 600,000 persons driven from their homes, Israel has not achieved its objectives, unless this carnage, which Beigin now describes as 'divinely ordained', was one of them.

Instead the reality of the Palestinian question has swept like a tidal wave through the corridors of power in capitals around the world, including Washington. With the war in its fortieth day, one of our fighters in Beirut expressed the situation to a journalist in these words: 'They are besieging Beirut militarily, but we are besieging Jerusalem politically.'

This has not been an Arab-Israeli war; for the first time it has been seen, even by some Israelis, as a confrontation between the Zionists and the Palestinians. If, as a result of this war, the international community could only come to realise that,

for us Lebanon in 1982 has been merely a re-enactment of the brutality inflicted on our people in 1948 and 1967, then our families and friends may not have died in vain.

The Zionists' decision to confront directly the PLO was nothing less than Israel's recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the force which represents the aspirations and rights of the 4.4 million Palestinian people. By declaring war on the PLO, the Beigin regime gave *de facto* recognition to the PLO, and destroyed any reasons why West European and the US governments should not do likewise. In London, Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hurd and in Paris President Mitterand and Foreign Minister Cheysson held talks with Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department.

Of course the United States, embarrassed as it is by the failure of the Israeli forces to complete their dirty mission quickly and before world opinion could express its sense of outrage, is no less under political seige than Beigin in Jerusalem. Philip Habbib was despatched quickly to the Middle East, where it was fast recognised that his task was to achieve through 'diplomacy' what the Israelis had failed to achieve on the battlefield.

His mission was to direct attention away from the terrible panorama of death and

destruction which lay across Lebanon from the south to the edge of Beirut, and the responsibility of Israel and the United States for this crime against humanity. Instead, Washington and her allies, some in Arab capitals, set the evacuation of Palestinian forces from Beirut as the priority. Israeli forces occupy half an Arab state, and besiege its capital city, while others sit and talk of a Palestinian evacuation as though the real problem were not Israel's aggression and invasion.

Moreover, President Reagan's call on the Arab states to provide a haven for the Palestinians under seige in Beirut merely underlines the distorted view in Washington of the Middle East conflict. The Zionists drove the Palestinians out of our homeland in 1948 and 1967, then in 1982 attempt to drive us further from our homeland by invading Lebanon. Now, Reagan pronounces, in all seriousness, that the Arab states have a responsibility to provide refuge for the Palestinians!

But despite Washington's efforts, like King Canute, to hold back the tide, Beigin's direct assault on the Palestinian people has served to focus international attention on our people's just cause, and the brutality of the Zionist movement. It is doubtful that the Zionists will be able to regain the confidence of the western public, misplaced as it was, which has been ruthlessly exploited for almost four decades to conceal the crimes being committed against our people.

Nevertheless, attention must be quickly redirected back to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, where the Israeli regime is fast proceeding with its plans to bring the territories occupied in 1967 under direct Israeli rule. The invasion of Lebanon was Israel's crude way of moving towards this annexation. It assumed that a blow against the PLO in Lebanon would smash the defiance of the West Bank and Gazan Palestinians. Since the start of the Israeli aggression, more Palestinian mayors have been sacked, including the moderate Gaza mayor Rashid Shawa.

But it should not be assumed that a change of regime in Israel would ease the problem. The Israeli Labour Party is no less opposed to a Palestinian state in Palestine, as Haim Barlev explained during a mid-July visit to London.

It is important that the subject of Palestinian rights in Palestine should not be pushed aside, while the attention turns to the Lebanon. Palestine remains the central issue, and the Zionists' abuse of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people remains the central problem.

It seems that only a crime of the magnitude of Israel's actions in Lebanon was able to bring the reality of Zionism and the Palestine question before the world community, making it impossible for the Zionists and their apologists to conceal any longer this injustice committed in our homeland, supported by the United States and other western governments.